

MOREHEAD-ROWAN



**MOVING FORWARD**



# MOREHEAD - ROWAN COUNTY

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2020 -2035

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan was created through a partnership with a variety of stakeholders led by the City of Morehead, Rowan County, Morehead-Rowan County Economic Development Council, and the Morehead-Rowan County Chamber of Commerce.



## Steering Committee Members

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*Morehead-Rowan County Chamber of Commerce*

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*City of Morehead Appointment*

Bill Redwine  
Member at Large  
*City of Morehead Appointment*

## Public Input

31 Focus Group Members

541 Survey Respondents

50 Public Meeting Attendees

## Consultant Team



THOMAS P. MILLER & ASSOCIATES



DESTINATION BY DESIGN  
planning | design | promotion



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## ABOUT THE PLAN

The Moving Forward Morehead-Rowan Economic Action Plan is a comprehensive community and economic development strategy for the City of Morehead and Rowan County. This plan will provide strategic guidance and direction for the city and county over the next 15 years. Supported by community stakeholders, the plan outlines goals and objectives for five key focus areas of community health and growth.

- Health, Wellness, and Safety
- Livability and Recreation
- Education and Workforce Development
- Environmental Sustainability
- Economy and Infrastructure

### Process

The plan was developed over a 12-month period from July 2019 through June 2020. The process included a variety of data gathering tools to provide a comprehensive understanding of existing conditions in the city and county to ensure goals align with local trends.

#### Focus Area Assessments

The first part of the process involved Focus Area Assessments. These assessments were broken into five focus areas. They included data gathering and analysis, asset mapping, and a SWOT analysis. This phase also involved focus groups designed to gather qualitative information on existing conditions for each focus group. The complete focus area assessments can be found in Appendix A.

#### Community Engagement

The second part of the process included a variety of community engagement techniques. An online survey was created and dispersed to all who live and/or work in the City of Morehead-Rowan County. The purpose of the survey was to gather community feedback about priorities and needs for economic and community development. The survey consisted of 24 questions relating to key topic areas. The survey gathered 541 individual responses with 511 indicating they were Rowan County residents. A summary of the public survey results can be found in Appendix B.

Findings from the data gathering tasks and draft goals were presented at a public meeting. This meeting provided an opportunity for community input and feedback on the information. A summary of the public input session can be found in Appendix C.

#### Plan Development

Final plan development involved three sessions with the Steering Committee to review and refine goals, objectives, and action items. The first session took place in person following the public meeting. The second two sessions were conducted virtually via video conference. The final plan was provided to the Steering Committee for comments and feedback before completion.

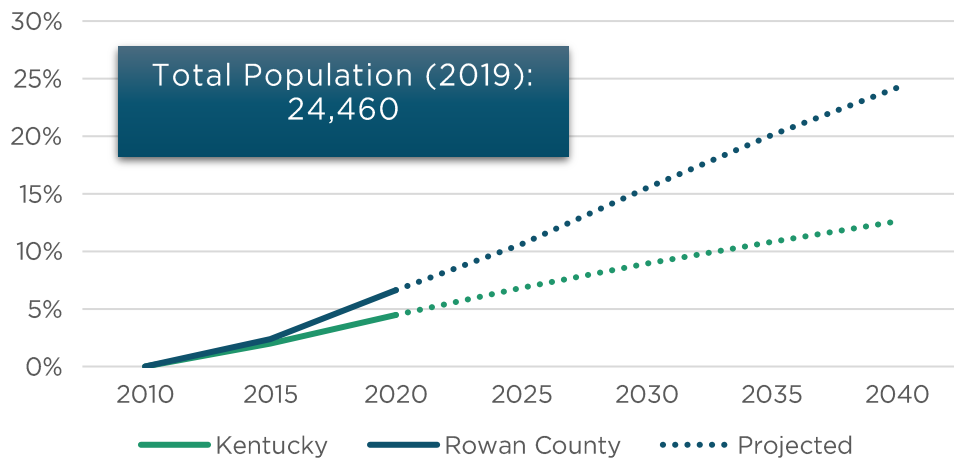


# ABOUT MOREHEAD-ROWAN

The City of Morehead and Rowan County are located in eastern Kentucky approximately one-hour east of Lexington along I-64. The community is home to two major anchor institutions in the form of Morehead State University and St. Claire HealthCare. The county also has a variety of natural assets including Cave Run Lake in the Daniel Boone National Forest. These assets drive tourism activity in the city and county that complements a strong local industry that is growing with new investments in high-tech agriculture and bourbon barrel manufacturing. As the hub of the surrounding region, the City of Morehead and Rowan County are growing, and this growth opens a number of opportunities that this plan will help realize.

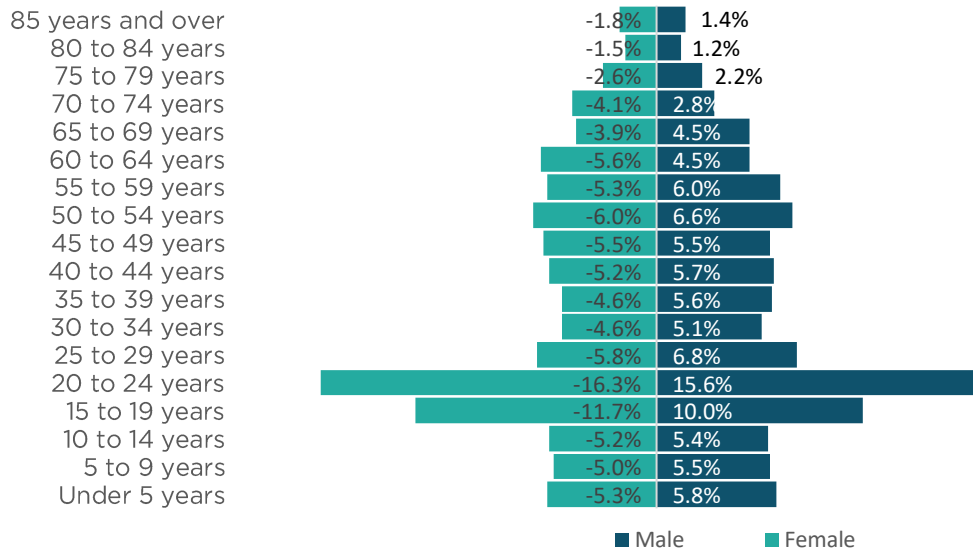
## Community Profile

Percentage Population Growth 2010-2040



Source: Annual Population Estimates 2010-2017, American Fact Finder, Population Projections, Kentucky State Data Center, 2016; 2019 Census Estimates

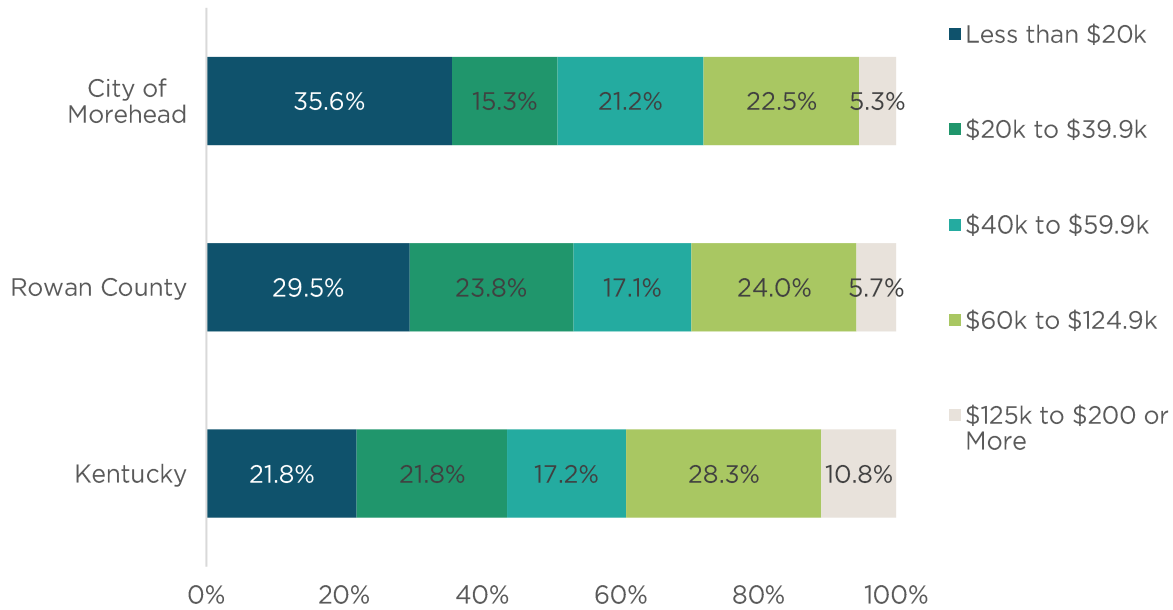
Population Pyramid



Source: US Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S0101

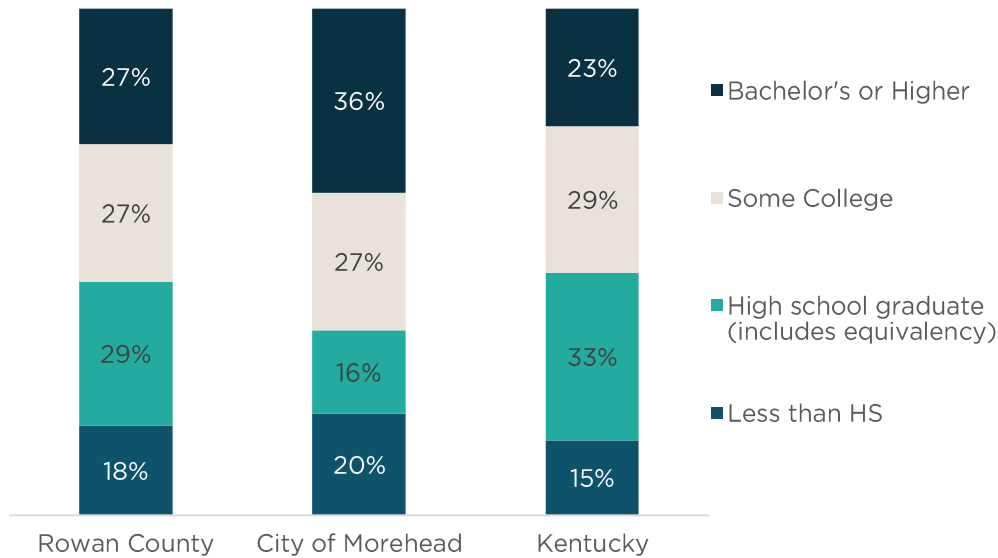


### Percent of Households by Income



reau, 2013-Community  
ites, Table

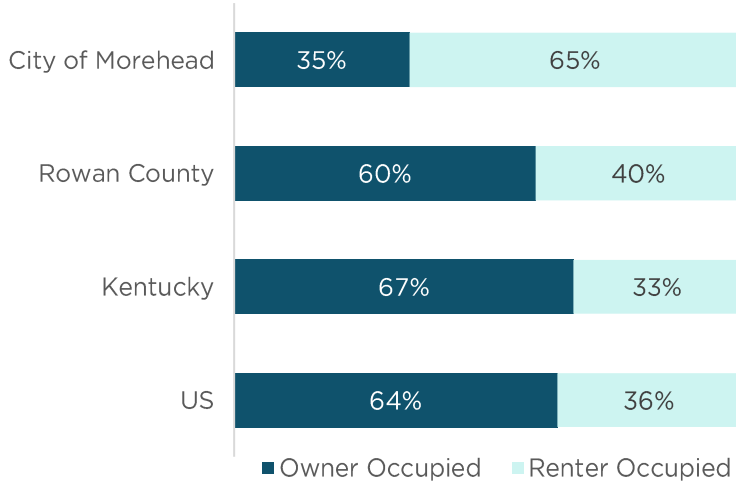
### Educational Attainment of the Population 25 and Older





# Housing Profile

## Occupancy Status (Renter vs. Owner)



**10,254**  
Total Housing Units

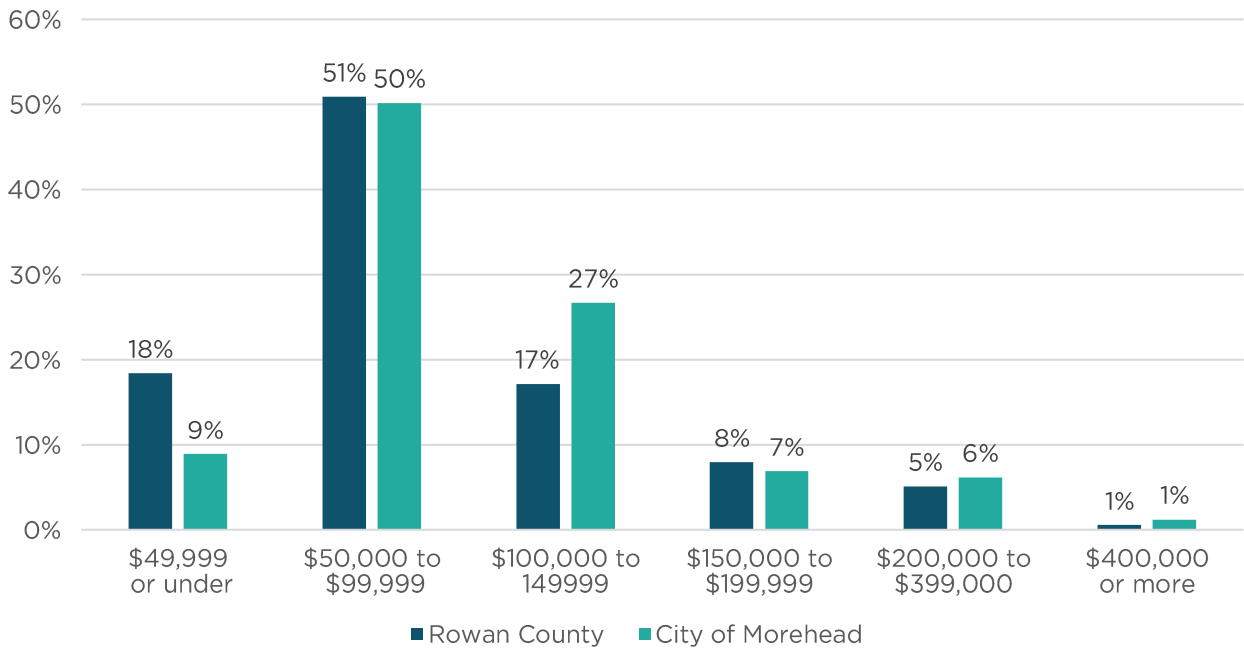
**Median Age:**

- 1977 – City of Morehead
- 1986 – Rowan County

**Median Value:**

- \$170,500 – City of Morehead
- \$121,000 – Rowan County

## Home Value Distribution



Source: US Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B25003

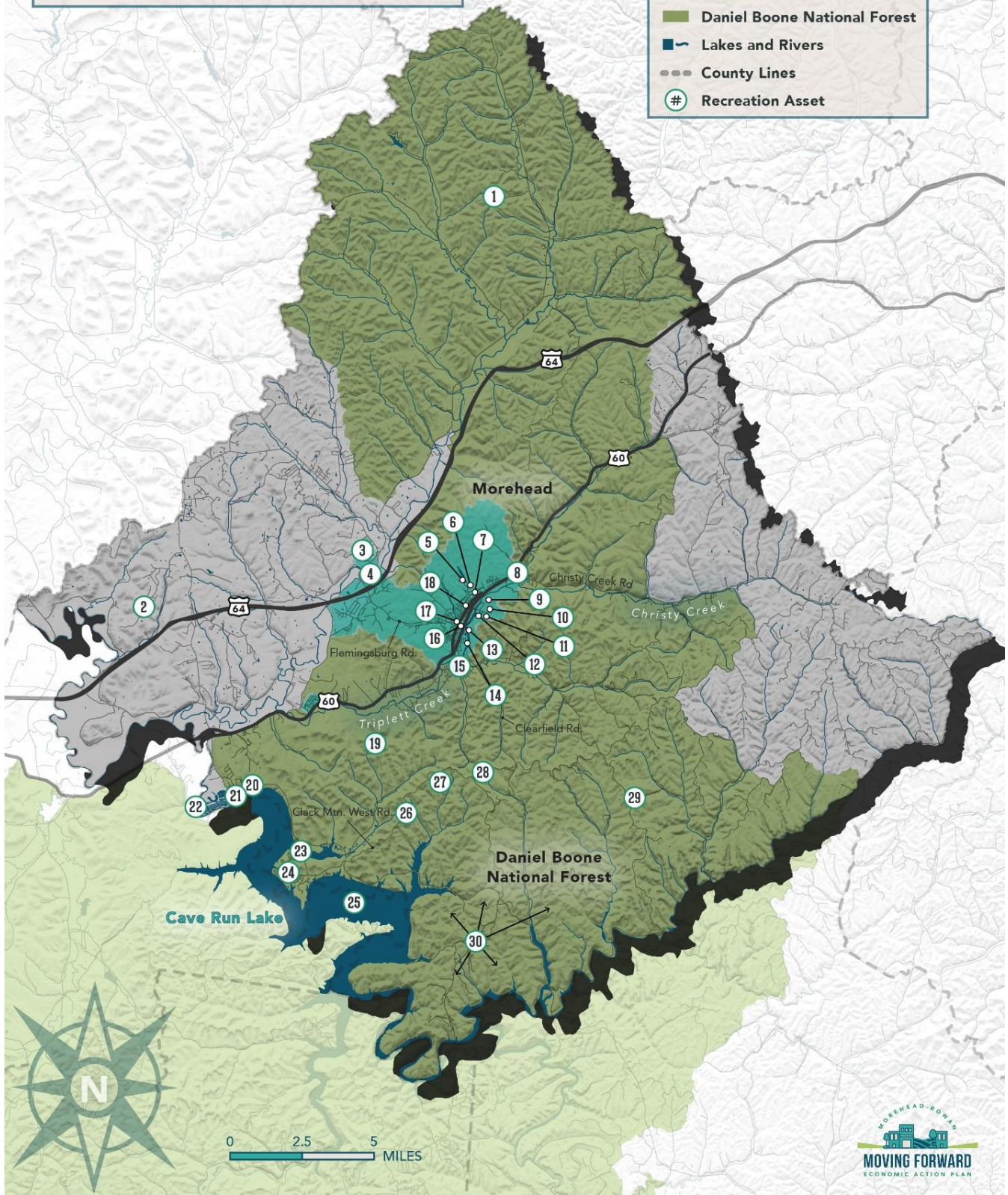


## EXISTING RECREATION ASSETS

ROWAN COUNTY, KY

## LEGEND

- Morehead City Limits
- Daniel Boone National Forest
- Lakes and Rivers
- County Lines
- Recreation Asset







## KEY

### Morehead - Rowan Recreation Assets

- ① Sheltopee Trace National Recreation Trail
- ② Eagle Trace Golf Course
- ③ Rowan County Senior High School Facilities
- ④ Zane Collins Community Park
- ⑤ Eagle Lake & Trailhead
- ⑥ Morehead State University Facilities
- ⑦ Laughlin Health Building
- ⑧ Rodburn Elementary School
- ⑨ Triplett Creek
- ⑩ Morehead City Park Complex
- ⑪ Rodburn Hollow Park and Loop Trail
- ⑫ Morehead Memorial Tree Park
- ⑬ Triplett Valley Park
- ⑭ Boone Hollan Wetlands & Nature Trail Area
- ⑮ Clearfield Elementary School Facilities
- ⑯ Kentucky Folk Art Center
- ⑰ Morehead Conference Center
- ⑱ Downtown Morehead
- ⑲ Limestone Knob
- ⑳ US Army Corp of Engineers Day Use Area
- ㉑ Minor E. Clark Fish Hatchery
- ㉒ Licking River
- ㉓ Scotts Creek Marina/Cave Run Marina
- ㉔ Twin Knobs Campground & Beach
- ㉕ Cave Run Lake
- ㉖ USFS Mountain Bike Trails/Clack Mountain Road West
- ㉗ Lockegee Rock
- ㉘ Dirt Nasty Off-Road Park
- ㉙ Slab Camp Climbing Area
- ㉚ Daniel Boone National Forest





## FOCUS AREA GOALS

For each of the five focus areas, there are two or three key goals listed below. The following sections will discuss each goal in depth, including the corresponding objectives and action items, as well as implementation elements. It will also provide an overview of elements from the focus area assessments, highlighting key data, and the SWOT analysis.



### HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY

1. ATTRACT AND RETAIN A SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE IN HEALTHCARE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, AND PUBLIC SAFETY.
2. BUILD AND MARKET HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY RESOURCES TO THE PUBLIC.



### LIVABILITY AND RECREATION

1. SUPPORT APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE COUNTY AND CITY TO CREATE A VIBRANT AND ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY WITH CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS, LOCAL COMMUNITY ASSETS, AND REGIONAL NATURAL ASSETS THAT INCLUDES DESTINATION-QUALITY OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ENCOURAGE TOURISM.
2. PROMOTE A SENSE OF PLACE THAT UNITES THE COUNTY AND CITY; REPRESENTS ITS EXCEPTIONAL DOWNTOWN, NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES, AND COMMUNITY EVENTS, FESTIVALS, AND FAMILY ACTIVITIES; AND ENCOURAGES COMMUNITY COHESION AND TOURISM.
3. ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF A HOUSING STRATEGY THAT ADDRESSES DEVELOPMENT AND REHABILITATION OF A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES AT A RANGE OF PRICE POINTS THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF HOUSEHOLDS AND RESIDENTS OF ALL INCOMES AND AGES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY AND CITY.



## EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

1. EDUCATE K-12 STUDENTS ON EXISTING AND FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN MOREHEAD-ROWAN COUNTY AND DEVELOP PROGRAMS AIMED AT TRAINING STUDENTS FOR LOCAL CAREERS.
2. BUILD UPON EXISTING CAREER PATHWAYS AND EXPAND SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH MAYSVILLE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY WITH A FOCUS ON PRE-PROFESSIONAL, HOSPITALITY, AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING TRACTS.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

1. MITIGATE LITTER ISSUES THROUGH AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS, INCREASED RECYCLING OPTIONS, AND BETTER ENFORCEMENT.
2. DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE FLOOD CONTROL STRATEGY, CREATING A SYSTEM FOR ASSESSING NEW OR REDEVELOPMENT IN KEY PROBLEM AREAS.



## ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1. IDENTIFY AREAS OF FUTURE GROWTH IN THE COUNTY AND PRIORITIZE AND INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THAT GROWTH WITH A FOCUS ON ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, WATER, WASTEWATER, AND BROADBAND.
2. LEVERAGE EXISTING ASSETS AND NEW INVESTMENTS TO ATTRACT AND GROW DIVERSE, QUALITY BUSINESSES, PRIORITIZING THE IDENTIFIED TARGET INDUSTRIES.



## HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY

**Goal 1: Attract and retain a sustainable workforce in healthcare, emergency medical services, and public safety.**

Objectives:

1. Build a strategy for developing additional training programs, particularly in specialty areas, and attracting students into fields with clearly defined pathways.
2. Develop an attraction and retention strategy for healthcare workers, including marketing initiatives and potential incentives.
3. Create a sustainable plan for establishing a career first responder service.

**Goal 2: Build and market health, wellness, and safety resources to the public.**

Objectives:

1. Develop a list of resources related to health, wellness, and safety.
2. Create a new coalition of partners to collaborate on a community based on ongoing needs assessments.
3. Establish campaigns to increase health literacy.

**S**

- Safe community
- Variety of health and wellness services
- Employment opportunities for students in health-related industries

**W**

- Road safety: no shoulders on major roads
- Access to fresh foods
- Prevalence of health issues

**O**

- Senior based programming
- Sharing of resources
- Rails to trails
- Sidewalks and biking paths
- Telemedicine
- Partnerships on big data

**T**

- Shortage of medical professionals
- Staffing of medical and fire response teams

## Key Data

### Survey Results

**89%**

Completely Agree or Agree that Rowan County is a Safe Place to Live

**57%**

Completely Agree or Agree that there is Sufficient Healthcare in Rowan County

Source: CMS Chronic Conditions Warehouse 2013-2017, <http://ccwdata.org/index.php>



28% of adults lack the daily needed physical activity



26% of adults in the county smoke



19% of adults binge drink



39% prevalence of hypertension in the county



## ATTRACT AND RETAIN A SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE IN HEALTHCARE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, AND PUBLIC SAFETY.

A quality healthcare workforce is critical to the wellbeing of a community. Rural communities in the United States often struggle to attract and retain healthcare workers, making it difficult to provide adequate healthcare services to the public. Morehead and Rowan County have a number of assets and programs that make training healthcare workers more feasible than some rural communities.

Morehead State University, St. Claire Regional Health Center and the University of Kentucky have partnered on the Rural Physician Leadership Program, which provides residency options at rural hospitals in Rowan County and other surrounding counties.

In addition to training, attracting and retaining skilled workers is key to growing the local healthcare workforce. Morehead and Rowan County could grow the number of healthcare workers in the community through strategic marketing of local healthcare opportunities and implementation of incentives that provide financial benefits for new residents willing to work in Rowan County.



## GOAL 1



### Objective 1: Build a strategy for developing additional training programs, particularly in specialty areas, and attracting students into fields with clearly defined pathways.

Increasing the number of educational and training options available for students interested in the healthcare field will help build a future pipeline of graduates. Identifying the key needs, particularly in specialty areas, growing capacity in existing programs, and marketing the pathway options are key steps needed to increase the healthcare workforce and transition existing residents into these critical jobs.

#### Lead Organizations



#### Partner Organizations



#### Action Items

1. Conduct an in-depth analysis of existing and future healthcare occupational needs, comparing the current pipeline of graduates to future demand

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

2. Inventory existing education and training programs including capacity and gaps

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

3. Expand capacity in the Rural Physician Leadership Program in partnership with University of Kentucky, Morehead State University, and St. Claire Regional Medical Center

*Timeline: 2025-2030*

4. Market career pathway opportunities in the healthcare field to existing students and residents

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

#### Evaluation Measures

- Completed occupational needs analysis
- Completed training inventory
- Marketing strategy for opportunities
- Number of students in the Rural Physician Leadership Program
- Number of healthcare program graduates

## GOAL 1



### Objective 2: Develop an attraction and retention strategy for healthcare workers, including marketing initiatives and potential incentives.

In addition to growing an internal pipeline of healthcare workers, attracting new residents and retaining workers is also important. Developing a local committee focused on employee retention will make sure local employer needs are met. Financial or other incentives for new residents in the healthcare field can help strengthen the attractiveness of the community for people in these occupations. Additionally, a common challenge for attracting highly skilled individuals in specialty areas is finding employment for a spouse or significant other. Strategies aimed at providing comprehensive welcome resources for an entire family will help attract more workers to the county.

#### Lead Organizations:



#### Partner Organizations:



#### Action Items

1. Establish a committee to determine employee and employer needs, focused on attraction and retention  
*Timeline: 2020-2021*
2. Evaluate incentive attraction tools, funding mechanisms, and models  
*Timeline: 2022-2025*
3. Create an accompanying spouse strategy to connect spouses to open positions in their field and provide welcome resources  
*Timeline: 2023-2024*

#### Evaluation Measures

- Formed committee and maintains regular meeting schedule
- Number of new welcome resources
- Number of successful out of county recruits in the healthcare field
- If incentive program is enacted:
  - Number of recipients of incentives
  - Total value of incentives
  - Return on investment - calculate based on economic impact of new tax generation from new residents



### Objective 3: Create a sustainable plan for establishing a career first responder service.

Currently, the City of Morehead and Rowan County rely on a volunteer fire department. This leaves the community more vulnerable to threat of fire and strains resources especially as the city and county have grown. Additionally, training for emergency medical service technicians has increased in cost and recruiting additional workers has become more difficult. The city and county should partner to determine how to fully implement a career first responder service capable of meeting current and future needs.

#### Lead Organizations:



#### Partner Organizations:



#### Action Items

1. Determine staffing needs and estimated cost of program  
*Timeline: 2020-2021*
2. Identify existing training programs and any gaps  
*Timeline: 2021-2022*
3. Identify existing training programs and any gaps  
*Timeline: 2021-2022*
4. Develop phased approach to hiring, partnering with training programs to increase capacity  
*Timeline: 2023-2025*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed cost study
- Completed inventory of training programs
- Number of new program graduates
- Number of new hires





## BUILD AND MARKET HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY RESOURCES TO THE PUBLIC.

There are a number health and wellness resources in the City of Morehead and Rowan County. However, there are also significant challenges for many members of the community. In order to tackle this issue, the city and county should take a two-phased approach focusing on marketing existing resources and building new services to help tackle the most serious health concerns.

The first step involves creating an inventory of existing resources. This will produce a marketing tool to provide to residents needing support, and will help local leadership identify gaps where additional resources are needed. Morehead and Rowan County should put together a group of experts to guide implementation of new resources, determining what are the most critical challenges and how to connect residents with new and additional resources.



## GOAL 2



### Objective 1: Develop a list of resources related to health, wellness, and safety.

There are many health and wellness resources in Morehead-Rowan County, but residents may not be aware of how to access them. Developing and marketing a list of these resources to community members will help ensure that they are more frequently utilized. Partners should adequately identify these resources and develop a method for targeted distribution to different audiences based on community needs. Additionally, creating a process and system for regular updates will be key to maintaining effectiveness of the program over the life of this plan.

#### Lead Organizations



#### Partner Organizations



#### Action Items

1. Inventory existing health and wellness organizations and businesses  
*Timeline: 2020*
2. Conduct resource assessment via survey or interviews  
*Timeline: 2021*
3. Identify distribution method(s) including website, print, social media, and target audiences (general population, healthcare/social workers)  
*Timeline: 2021*
4. Develop marketing materials and distribute  
*Timeline: 2021-2022*
5. Determine process for assessing effectiveness of distribution and conducting regular inventory updates  
*Timeline: 2022*

#### Evaluation Measures

- Completed inventory of organizations
- Number of surveys/interviews completed
- Completed marketing strategy
- Number of engagements with distribution

## GOAL 2



### Objective 2: Create a new coalition of partners to collaborate on a community based on ongoing needs assessments.

In order to identify the most critical health needs in Morehead-Rowan County, a stakeholder group should be convened to assess current health needs and identify areas of focus. This group should look to conduct regular community health needs assessments that will identify focus areas. Each of the focus areas should have action teams responsible for implementing resource plans for that area. Although these focus areas may evolve over time, the process should remain the same. Potential areas of focus from the most recent community health needs assessments are listed below.

#### Lead Organizations:



#### Partner Organizations:



#### Action Items

1. Continue to conduct community health needs assessments on a regular basis to identify ongoing needs  
*Timeline: 2021*
2. Create action teams for priority areas and build partnerships with other relevant aspects of the plan:
  - a. Childhood and Community Obesity: Invest in health literacy, trail development, and fitness programs
  - b. Access to Health/Dental Care: Prioritize medical school training in unprioritized specialties, develop incentive programs, and market available programs
  - c. Drug Addiction/Prescription Drug Abuse: Develop educational initiatives, programs to spot early warning signs, and pursue additional grant funding
  - d. Tobacco Use: Invest in health literacy programs aimed at middle and high school children, initiate smoke-free ordinances, develop smoking cessation classes  
*Timeline: 2022*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed Community Health Needs Assessment
- Formed Action Teams
- Improved Health Outcomes for Each Focus Area:
  - Childhood Obesity Rate
  - Drug Addiction Statistics
  - Smoking Rate



### Objective 3: Establish campaigns to increase health literacy.

Increasing health literacy within the community is vital to increasing health outcomes. Targeted promotional campaigns aimed at the most vulnerable will help encourage healthy behaviors. These campaigns should align with the key focus areas established in Objective 2 in order to ensure they are addressing the most pressing health issues in the community. Additionally, a focus on early intervention in children and youth should be an ongoing priority.

#### Lead Organizations



**MOREHEAD**  
ONE COMMUNITY. MANY OPPORTUNITIES.

#### Partner Organizations



#### Action Items

1. Determine target audiences: students, young adults, parents, older adults  
*Timeline: 2020*
2. Identify priority messages based on community health assessments  
*Timeline: 2020*
3. Tailor unique messages for different audiences  
*Timeline: 2021*
4. Support interactive methods for engaging students as a focus for early intervention related to drug, alcohol, and tobacco use as well as obesity and wellness initiatives  
*Timeline: 2022*
5. Focus on parenting initiatives to encourage family approaches to health and wellness  
*Timeline: 2022*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed campaign plan
- Number of initiatives established
- Number of students engaged
- Number of parents engaged



## LIVABILITY AND RECREATION

**Goal 1: Support appropriate development within the County and City to create a vibrant and attractive community with connectivity between surrounding neighborhoods, local community assets, and regional natural assets that includes destination-quality outdoor recreation infrastructure to enhance quality of life and encourage tourism.**

Objectives:

1. Create a comprehensive plan that promotes investment in a diverse business, retail, and residential environment with a strategic focus on five primary growth areas including; I-64/KY-32 interchange, downtown Morehead, KY-801 Corridor, Cave Run Lake, and regional trail connection corridors.
2. Develop an extensive interconnected blueway, trail, and multi-use greenway system that connects neighborhoods; service providers; and local, community, and regional natural assets to provide a variety of safe, equitable, multi-modal alternative transportation routes and options.
3. In partnership with local, regional, and Federal partners, develop and promote destination-quality outdoor recreation infrastructure within the City, County and Region to expand recreational facilities and opportunities that will serve a diverse and growing residential and tourist population of all ages and abilities.

**Goal 2: Promote a sense of place that unites the County and City; represents is exceptional downtown, natural and recreational resources, and community events festivals, and family activities; and encourages community cohesion and tourism.**

Objectives:

1. Develop an effective place brand strategy and visual identity for the County and City that highlights unique community and natural assets.
2. Encourage the preservation and development of unique programmable public spaces such as plazas, green spaces, and parks that can serve as venues for an expanded inventory of community events and cultural and social opportunities.
3. In partnership with local, regional, and Federal partners, develop and promote destination-quality outdoor recreation infrastructure within the City, County and Region to expand recreational facilities and opportunities that will serve a diverse and growing residential and tourist population of all ages and abilities.



**Goal 3: Encourage the creation of a housing strategy that addresses development and rehabilitation of a variety of housing types at a range of price points that meet the needs of households and residents of all incomes and ages throughout the County and City.**

**Objectives:**

1. Create a community housing strategy with the cooperation of stakeholders including the County, City, University, and local industry and business leaders to ensure an adequate supply of rental and ownership housing for all income levels is available to meet current and projected community needs.
2. Promote development of livable and sustainable communities with a mix of housing types, quality design, and character that respects the unique environmental, rural, and urban settings of the County and City and adheres to local land use plans and policies.
3. Evaluate existing land and housing stock for new construction and redevelopment opportunities to preserve long-term affordability and quality rental and ownership opportunities.

**S**

- National Forest Trails
- Sheltolee Trace NRT
- Laughlin Health Building
- Variety of opportunities to be active
- Bike/Recreation Plan

**W**

- Promotion of community assets
- Consensus around process for development
- Community and Local resident Involvement with Planned Events and Activities

**O**

- Downtown development and engagement
- Utilizing water sources for recreation: Triplett Creek, Licking River, Fish Hatchery
- Access to mountains and trails

**T**

- Competitors with strong draws to visit
- Lack of partnership around development
- Weather and seasonal population

**Key Data**

**Survey Results**

- 49%** Completely Agree or Agree the Count has Amenities to make it a Good Place to Live
- 44%** Completely Agree or Agree that there are Good Recreation Options in the County

**What Amenities are Needed?**

1. Family Activities (69%)
2. Restaurants (68%)
3. Amusement (51%)



## SUPPORT APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE COUNTY AND CITY TO CREATE A VIBRANT AND ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY WITH CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS, LOCAL COMMUNITY ASSETS, AND REGIONAL NATURAL ASSETS THAT INCLUDES DESTINATION-QUALITY OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ENCOURAGE TOURISM.

Comprehensive planning for targeted growth areas must occur to promote appropriate investment, development, and effective business recruitment. Connectivity between growth areas and community and regional assets provides benefits to residents and tourists. A unique community that supports a diverse business, retail, and residential environment; features connectivity to abundant recreational and natural assets found in the surrounding area; and offers a strong sense of place will retain local talent, attract new residents and businesses, and draw visitors and tourists to the area.



# GOAL I



**Objective 1: Create a comprehensive plan that promotes investment in a diverse business, retail, and residential environment with a strategic focus on five primary growth areas including; I-64/KY-32 interchange, downtown Morehead, KY-801 Corridor, Cave Run Lake, and regional trail connection corridors.**

Small area plans for each of the five primary growth areas are the key to creating a vision for future commercial and residential development in the City of Morehead and Rowan County. Identifying development and redevelopment opportunities, willing landowners and developers, and specific businesses that can take advantage of the unique assets of the area will encourage types of investment that community leaders desire.

## Lead Organizations



## Partner Organizations:



Local business owners  
Local developers  
Large property owners

## Action Items

1. Develop small area plans for each of the five primary growth areas that address previous planning efforts, existing land use, infrastructure, traffic and pedestrian issues, and a comprehensive vision.

*Timeline: 2021-2025*

2. Identify opportunities for residential, business, and mixed-use development, and engage with landowners/developers to identify willing participants.

*Timeline: 2021-2025*

3. Develop strategies to identify, attract, and market to specific businesses in the hospitality, tourism, and outdoor recreation industries and identify optimal locations for development.

*Timeline: 2021-2023*

## Evaluation Measures:

- Completed small area plans for the five primary growth areas.
- Number of identified specific opportunities and locations for residential, business, and mixed-use development.
- Identification, attraction, and marketing strategy developed for targeted businesses.
- Number of specific targeted businesses identified and engaged
- Number of landowners/developers engaged to identify willing participants of targeted locations.



# GOAL I



**Objective 2: Develop an extensive interconnected blueway, trail, and multi-use greenway system that connects neighborhoods; service providers; and local, community, and regional natural assets to provide a variety of safe, equitable, multi-modal alternative transportation routes and options.**

The City of Morehead and Rowan County have developed a comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that supports extensive development and improvements to encourage walking and riding within downtown Morehead and between key assets countywide. Implementation of this plan will provide safer alternative transportation options for residents and connections between key tourist areas. An interconnected trail system also directly and indirectly supports health and wellness and environmental sustainability focus area goals and objectives.

## Action Items

1. Continue implementation of project recommendations as outlined in the Morehead/Rowan County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.  
*Timeline: 2021-2035*
2. Explore options for landowner incentives for permanent protection of flood plains and riparian corridors to allow for conservation and future development of public greenways/trails within these corridors.  
*Timeline: 2021-2023*
3. Update and revise local street design standards to include streetscape enhancements, universal design criteria for pedestrian infrastructure, and complete streets principles within Downtown Morehead to encourage the use of a variety of modes of transportation.  
*Timeline: 2021-2025*

## Lead Organizations



## Partner Organizations



## Daniel Boone Rails to Trails



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®



## Evaluation Measures:

- Number of project recommendations implemented as prioritized and phased in the Morehead/Rowan County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Identification and/or creation of landowner incentives for protection of property located in floodplains and riparian corridors to allow for conservation and public use of greenways/trails.
- Number of landowners engaged to identify willing participants in greenway and trail development.
- Completed update and revision of local street design standards for Downtown Morehead.

# GOAL I



**Objective 3:** In partnership with local, regional, and Federal partners, develop and promote destination-quality outdoor recreation infrastructure within the City, County and Region to expand recreational facilities and opportunities that will serve a diverse and growing residential and tourist population of all ages and abilities.

The creation of an advisory committee with community and regional stakeholders will help establish a vision for outdoor recreation infrastructure that promotes the local community and regional natural assets that make the City of Morehead, Rowan County, and the region unique. Infrastructure development should increase access to these recreational assets for a wide variety and number of residents and tourists enhancing quality of life and promoting tourism.

### Lead Organization



### Partner Organization



Local land trusts

Local governments of adjoining counties

### Action Items

1. Create a County/City advisory committee, including local government officials, economic development and tourism representatives, business owners, and staff/students from local educational institutions, to establish a vision and plan for local and regional outdoor recreation infrastructure development.

*Timeline: 2021-2023*

2. Determine the resources necessary to implement the County/City outdoor recreation plan to address staffing, implementation, and marketing.

*Timeline: 2021-2023*

3. Encourage the creation of a regional advisory committee to address initiatives and projects that involve multiple jurisdictions, Federal partners, and public land conservation organizations and agencies to coordinate regional recreation development and marketing efforts.

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Creation of City/County advisory committee.
- Completed plan for local and regional outdoor infrastructure development that addresses vision, recommendations, and implementation.
- Determine and assign resources for implementation of outdoor infrastructure development plan.
- Creation of regional advisory committee.



## PROMOTE A SENSE OF PLACE THAT UNITES THE COUNTY AND CITY; REPRESENTS ITS EXCEPTIONAL DOWNTOWN, NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES, AND COMMUNITY EVENTS, FESTIVALS, AND FAMILY ACTIVITIES; AND ENCOURAGES COMMUNITY COHESION AND TOURISM.

It is more important than ever for communities to sell themselves as a desirable place to visit, work, live, and play. A sense of place promotes community cohesion and encourages tourists to return to communities that they feel a part of when they visit. A customized brand platform that establishes a unified vision around community values and effectively showcases the variety of community and natural assets found within the City of Morehead and throughout Rowan County, will support a sense of place that attracts tourists, employers, and residents.



## GOAL 2



### Objective 1: Develop an effective place brand strategy and visual identity for the County and City that highlights unique community and natural assets.

A vision for unique branding and visual identity must be determined by key stakeholders in the community. The projected image of the current brand should be evaluated in comparison to the perceived image by residents and tourists and refined or redeveloped appropriately. Defining a strong, consistent yet customized brand platform and creating collateral materials that visually support marketing efforts will be an important part of effectively promoting a sense of place.

#### Lead Organizations



#### Partner Organizations:



#### Action Items

1. Develop an organizational structure with key stakeholders and determine project vision, goals, and objectives.

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

2. Conduct a brand study and market research to analyze and evaluate the current place brand in reference to place identity, perceived place image, and projected place image.

*Timeline: 2022-2024*

3. Define and create a strong, consistent yet customized, strategic brand platform that establishes a unified vision, reflects community values, and supports internal and external marketing efforts.

*Timeline: 2022-2024*

4. Create logo systems and visual assets for digital and print applications to support strategic brand objectives

*Timeline: 2022-2024*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Developed an organizational structure with key stakeholders.
- Completed brand study and market research to evaluate current place brand.
- Created a strategic brand platform.
- Created logo system and visual assets for digital and print applications.

## GOAL 2



**Objective 2: Encourage the preservation and development of unique programmable public spaces such as plazas, green spaces, and parks that can serve as venues for an expanded inventory of community events and cultural and social opportunities.**

Underutilized public spaces within Downtown Morehead and Rowan County should be identified and utilized for community events that will attract and serve residents and tourists. In addition to existing events, the focus of additional programming for families and tourists should promote year-round opportunities and encourage multiple-day stays.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations



### Action Items

1. Identify publicly owned and underutilized properties within the City and County that can be utilized as programmable public spaces.

*Timeline: 2021-2023*

2. Develop a comprehensive database of existing community events and cultural and social opportunities available to residents and tourists.

*Timeline: 2021*

3. Create a County/City programming committee to develop additional community events, festivals, and family activities with a focus on year-round activities that attract tourism to the area and encourage multiple-day stays.

*Timeline: 2021*

### Evaluation Measures

- Number of identified publicly owned and underutilized properties within the County and City.
- Development of a comprehensive database of community events and cultural and social opportunities.
- Creation of a city/county programming committee.
- Number of community events and cultural and social opportunities available for the public and tourists.



## Objective 3: Establish a vision and plan for the joint development of internal and external marketing campaigns that effectively educate, promote, and encourage residents and tourists to take advantage of regional recreational opportunities.

Partnerships between County, City, and Regional organizations and committees will represent a unified effort to market and promote existing natural and recreational opportunities to residents and visitors. The public school system and higher education institutions within the community can increase awareness of these unique opportunities among students and their families through focused training and use that encourages local interest in hospitality and outdoor recreation.

### Lead Organization



### Partner Organizations



US Army Corps of Engineers®



### Action Items

1. Work in partnership with the County/City and Regional advisory committees for outdoor recreation infrastructure development to create an internal and external communications and marketing plan to effectively promote existing natural recreational assets to increase awareness and use by residents, as well as encourage tourism.

*Timeline: 2021-2025*

2. Partner with the public-school system and higher education institutions to promote hospitality and outdoor recreation training for students and residents.

*Timeline: 2021-2035*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Complete internal and external communications and marketing plan to promote natural recreational assets.
- Number of students participating in hospitality and outdoor recreation training.



## ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF A HOUSING STRATEGY THAT ADDRESSES DEVELOPMENT AND REHABILITATION OF A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES AT A RANGE OF PRICE POINTS THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF HOUSEHOLDS AND RESIDENTS OF ALL INCOMES AND AGES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY AND CITY.

The lack of diversity in existing housing stock and price ranges affects current residents and workers and creates challenges for economic developers attempting to attract new employers and residents. The demand for new and rehabilitated housing will continue to grow as new industry develops in Rowan County and the existing population ages. Stakeholders that represent local government, educational institutions, and business and industry must work together to identify the key needs of their populations and assess current trends and existing policies. The creation of incentives for development and funding opportunities for housing finance must be used in combination to assist developers and meet the needs of residents in the community.



# GOAL 3



**Objective 1: Create a community housing strategy with the cooperation of stakeholders including the County, City, University, and local industry and business leaders to ensure that an adequate supply of both rental and ownership housing for all income levels is available to meet current and projected community needs.**

Understanding the key housing needs of the community and local stakeholders and analyzing existing supply, affordability, and demand is the key to developing an effective community housing strategy. Partnership opportunities between local government, community organizations, industry employers, and developers should be explored to create additional assistance programs for renters and homeowners and increase the capacity for additional housing development.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations



Local business and industry leaders

Non-profit community service organizations

Local developers



### Action Items

1. Create a County/City advisory committee including local government officials, community organizations, and industry employers, to develop a strategic community housing plan to guide all housing related efforts.

*Timeline: 2021-2023*

2. Analyze local trends in housing supply, affordability, and demand, and identify key needs.

*Timeline: 2022-2024*

3. Assess the current capacity for housing development by non-profit organizations, for-profit developers, and local government.

*Timeline: 2022-2024*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Creation of City/County advisory committee.
- Completed strategic community housing plan.
- Completed analysis and identified key needs.
- Completed assessment of current housing development capacity and existing partnerships.



# GOAL 3



**Objective 2: Promote development of livable and sustainable communities which include a mix of housing types, quality design, and character that respects the unique environmental, rural, and urban settings of the County and City and adheres to local land use plans and policies.**

Policies that encourage and incentivize a mix of housing types at a range of price points for target acquisition and development sites will promote development that meets the key needs of the community. Housing types and graduated housing communities that focus on affordability and accessibility are important to allow seniors to age in place and remain in the community.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations



Local business and industry leaders



Non-profit community service organizations

Local developers

### Action Items

1. Assess existing County/City housing and development policies for support of non-traditional housing, accessible housing, housing improvements, and housing types that meet key needs.

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

2. Encourage policy development to create and refine incentives that expand partnerships and funding sources for housing types that meet key needs in target development and acquisition areas.

*Timeline: 2021-2025*

3. Promote the development of housing types with a particular emphasis on senior living to focus on affordability, accessibility, graduated housing communities, and active retirement living.

*Timeline: 2021-2025*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed assessment of existing housing and development policies.
- Policy development for incentives that expand partnerships and funding sources.
- Number of new and redeveloped projects that focus on providing seniors with a mix of housing types and living options.

## GOAL 3



### Objective 3: Evaluate existing land and housing stock for new construction and redevelopment opportunities to preserve long-term affordability and quality rental and ownership opportunities.

Existing land should be evaluated in terms of location and suitability for development of housing that will meet key needs of the community. Assessing existing housing stock is necessary to determine the need for rehabilitation, repair, and accessibility. Funding opportunities to finance and implement improvements will preserve and enhance older homes found throughout Rowan County and the City of Morehead and encourage long-term affordability.

#### Lead Organizations



#### Partner Organizations



Local land trusts

Non-profit community service organizations

Local developers

#### Action Items

1. Explore the establishment of a community land trust program to acquire and maintain properties for future housing development.

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

2. Promote the establishment of funding opportunities to finance and implement housing rehabilitation, repair, and accessibility improvements to preserve and enhance existing housing stock.

*Timeline: 2021-2035*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Parcels evaluated for availability of new construction opportunities.
- Number of existing housing stock assessed for rehabilitation, repair, and accessibility improvements.
- Number and amount of existing funding opportunities to finance and implement housing rehabilitation, repair, and accessibility improvements.



## EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Goal 1: Educate K-12 students on existing and future job opportunities in Morehead-Rowan County and develop programs aimed at training students for local careers.**

Objectives:

1. Develop K-12 as preparation for college/university/trades by aligning curriculum with broad sector-based career pathways.
2. Build authentic learning experiences and partnerships through curriculum, by using key partnerships after school or through other extended learning opportunities provided to students.
3. Based on targeted industries in Economy and Infrastructure objectives, gather information on supplemental programming for K-12 students and career pathways.

**S**

- Diverse skillset of individuals in education
- New businesses
- Work Ethic Seal
- Morehead State University
- Individuals in the education system
- CTE Program

**W**

- Disengaged students
- Quality of teachers
- Retention of students from Morehead State University
- Lack of resources

**O**

- Community partnerships
- Aviation at the airport
- Draw talent from neighboring counties
- Charter schools
- Experiential learning
- Dual Credit

**Goal 2: Build upon existing career pathways and expand sector opportunities for students with Maysville Community and Technical College and Morehead State University with a focus on pre-professional, hospitality, and advanced manufacturing tracts.**

Objectives:

1. Create a robust internship program with local employers and educational institutions that includes the hospitality industry, agribusiness, and advanced manufacturing.
2. Create a streamlined communication board in partnership with local businesses to attract and develop workers toward sector opportunities related to career pathways.

**T**

- State funding
- Recruitment of new talent
- Outflow of current workers
- Opioid epidemic
- Brain drain
- Lack of staff training



## EDUCATE K-12 STUDENTS ON EXISTING AND FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN MOREHEAD-ROWAN COUNTY AND DEVELOP PROGRAMS AIMED AT TRAINING STUDENTS FOR LOCAL CAREERS.

Morehead and Rowan County offer a wide variety of job opportunities for residents. However, communicating these opportunities to local students remains a priority in order to improve retention of residents and connect the local job market with skilled workers. Efforts to align K-12 curriculum and ensure a connection to existing skills needs of the workforce are key to growing local businesses. Rowan County Schools should partner with local employers to implement special events, local employer tours, internship programs, and defined career pathways to ensure those local connections are created during K-12 years.



# GOAL I



## Objective 1: Develop K-12 as preparation for college/university/trades by aligning curriculum with broad sector-based career pathways.

Rowan County Schools already offer a number of career pathway programs ranging from Animal Science to Business Management. These programs allow K-12 students to prepare for careers in specific trades fields and/or better prepare for college or university training. In order to grow and expand the impact of these programs, an alignment between career pathway programs and existing jobs in the county should take place. This will help identify additional pathway programs that could be developed and any key skills gaps that should be improved.

### Action Items

1. Evaluate existing career pathways currently in place

*Timeline: 2020*

2. Determine additional pathways based on current employee needs in Morehead-Rowan County

*Timeline: 2021*

3. Identify key skills/competency gaps

*Timeline: 2021*

4. Develop curriculum to support existing skills and competency gaps

*Timeline: 2022*

### Lead Organizations



### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed career pathway evaluation
- New career pathway/competency programs

### Partner Organizations:



Local business and industry leaders



## Objective 2: Build authentic learning experiences and partnerships through curriculum, by using key partnerships after school or through other extended learning opportunities provided to students.

Connecting students with local career opportunities involves providing hands-on experiences in order to help students evaluate potential career options. Career days and special events as well as local internships will allow for students to connect with local employers and gain valuable skills. Building a group of engaged local businesses is a critical piece of this effort and will help spur this effort to connect local students with local job opportunities.

### Lead Organizations



### Action Items

1. Create a coalition of business partners looking for apprentices, interns, or other unique employee engagements

*Timeline: 2021*

2. Develop a system for matching students with experiences

*Timeline: 2021*

3. Host career day and other special events designed to connect employers to students

*Timeline: 2021-2022*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Number of business partners engaged
- Number of career events hosted

### Partner Organizations:



Local business and industry leaders



### Objective 3: Based on targeted industries in Economy and Infrastructure objectives, gather information on supplemental programming for K-12 students and career pathways.

Efforts to align local job opportunities to local students should focus on the target industries discussed in the Economy and Infrastructure focus area. These opportunities include aerospace, automotive, and high-tech manufacturing, industries that will allow Morehead and Rowan County to grow a workforce aligned with new business attraction opportunities and help ensure local students are able to transition into these new and growing industries within the county.

#### Action Items

1. Create pathways for careers in aerospace, automotive, and high-tech manufacturing

*Timeline: 2022*

2. Invite students for business tours and career days at local employers

*Timeline: 2022*

3. Develop informational materials for students on careers in target industries, encouraging

*Timeline: 2022*

#### Lead Organizations



#### Evaluation Measures:

- Number of new career pathway programs
- Number of students engaged with business tours

#### Partner Organizations:



Local business and industry leaders



## BUILD UPON EXISTING CAREER PATHWAYS AND EXPAND SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH MAYSVILLE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY WITH A FOCUS ON PRE-PROFESSIONAL, HOSPITALITY, AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING TRACTS.

In addition to connecting local K-12 students to the available job opportunities in the Morehead and Rowan County, a focus on career training at the university and community college level can help grow the workforce in specialized areas. In particular, pre-professional, hospitality, and advanced manufacturing are areas in which strategic partners should look to grow training options and to connect training resources to local employers. The focus should be on developing internship and related opportunities in these career fields, creating tools for connecting potential employees to employers and providing resources for nontraditional adult learners.





## GOAL 2



**Objective 1: Create a robust internship program with local employers and educational institutions that includes the hospitality industry, agribusiness, and advanced manufacturing.**

Internships allow students to gain hands on experience by connecting them with local employers in their desired career field. Morehead-Rowan County have a number of employers seeking a skilled workforce. Partnering with these employers to create substantial internship programs, particularly related to hospitality, agribusiness, and advanced manufacturing can help students gain new skills in these specific subject areas. Careful evaluation and feedback of these internship programs is vital to ensure there is a transfer of skills and that students are gaining valuable experience that can be utilized in a variety of settings.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations



Local business and industry leaders

### Action Items

1. Build a coalition of local employers in need of long-term workforce solutions  
*Timeline: 2020*
2. Develop a system for matching local students with internship opportunities  
*Timeline: 2021*
3. Create a system for evaluating internships, documenting the skills gained and applicability for further career growth  
*Timeline: 2021*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed career pathway evaluation
- New career pathway/competency programs



## Objective 2: Create a streamlined communication board in partnership with local businesses to attract and develop workers toward sector opportunities related to career pathways.

Communicating the available jobs in a community to residents is critical to creating efficiencies within the job market. This is true not only as students graduate with specific skillsets but also as they enter training programs. A communication board that not only describes the available job opportunities within a community, but also details relevant training and skills programs could help establish this key connection point between those looking to further their careers in a given area. An electronic platform could provide critical information for job seekers and make these important connections between employees and employers. Some examples of similar tools include the Skillful program by Markle and Pipeline AZ.<sup>1</sup>

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations



Local business and industry leaders

### Action Items

1. Develop a platform for local business job postings  
*Timeline: 2021*
2. Create a system for defining skills, competencies, and requirements for local jobs  
*Timeline: 2022*
3. Integrate internship and apprenticeship opportunities into communication board as part of a comprehensive career system  
*Timeline: 2022*
4. Establish programs for adult learning to enhance soft and hard skills; can target adult learners looking to enter new field, under skilled adults, and those exiting the prison system  
*Timeline: 2023*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Job posting platform
- Skill set classification
- Number of jobs, internships, and apprenticeship programs posted
- Number of jobs matches
- Number of adult learners connected to programs

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.skillful.com/>; <https://pipelineaz.com/>



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal 1: Mitigate litter issues through awareness campaigns, increased recycling options, and better enforcement.**

Objectives:

1. Address litter at its source through innovative waste reduction and source control measures.
2. Expand Adopt-A-Highway programming through partnerships with local businesses and community partners.
3. Design a communication campaign to show the effects of litter in the community.

**S**

Natural Resources: Boone National Forest and Cave Run Lake

Community initiatives: recycling center, littering program, Trail Town Initiative, Firewise Program

Community events: Memorial Tree Walk, Wetland Restoration Project, Rodburn Park

**Goal 2: Develop a comprehensive flood control strategy, creating a system for assessing new or redevelopment in key problem areas.**

Objectives:

1. Work with key areas of Farmers Crest, 100 Year Line, North Fork, and Old 801 to identify flood control issues.
2. Create a Rewards Rebate Program offering rebates to property owners who install RainScapes techniques such as rain gardens, rain barrels, conservation landscaping and other approved projects that help control stormwater in Downtown Morehead.
3. Partner with businesses, city departments, and property owners to implement innovative stormwater solutions as demonstration projects.

**W**

Environmental compliance

Public awareness/citizen engagement

Pollution/waste in streams

**O**

Solar power

Recycling increase

Communications and partnerships

Citizen engagement

Storm sewer systems

**T**

Flooding

Lack of zoning in County

Erosion threats

Forest fires

Amount of litter coming from highway

Funding and long-term planning



## MITIGATE LITTER ISSUES THROUGH AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS, INCREASED RECYCLING OPTIONS, AND BETTER ENFORCEMENT.

Waste management is one of the most significant environmental issues in Morehead and Rowan County. Local leaders expressed that litter control is one of the biggest challenges faced by those who are charged with environmental management in the county. Addressing waste management is a key step to ensure the long-term livability and sustainability of Morehead and Rowan County.



# GOAL 1



## Objective 1: Address litter at its source through innovative waste reduction and source control measures.

Source identification is key to effective litter reduction. Identifying the source helps for an effective program to be put into place. A one solution approach will not be effective due to the diverse streams that cause litter to enter the environment. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed for this objective.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations:



### Action Items

1. Identify and measure sources and causes of litter in the area

*Timeline: 2020*

2. Classify the litter into groupings such as common waste, large items, cigarette butts, etc.

*Timeline: 2020*

3. Implement solutions targeted at each grouping such as the creation of convenient drop off locations for large waste items and interactive cigarette butt receptacles

*Timeline: 2021*

4. Review and update relevant litter ordinances, increasing fines and enforcement

*Timeline: 2021*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed litter source evaluation
- Number of solutions/strategies implemented
- Review of ordinance
- Overall reduction in litter



## Objective 2: Expand Adopt-A-Highway programming through partnerships with local businesses and community partners.

Originally started in Texas, Adopt-A-Highway is now a respected national program. Expanding the programming in Morehead and Rowan County and engaging with local businesses will help increase the natural beauty of the area as well as expand the sense of place and community.

### Lead Organizations



### Action Items

1. Identify road sections that have the largest amounts of litter  
*Timeline: 2020*
2. Review and expand Adopt-A-Highway programming and set up guidelines  
*Timeline: 2021*
3. Identify businesses, organizations, and community partners and send out marketing encouraging them to participate  
*Timeline: 2021*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Road miles under Adopt-A-Highway program

### Partner Organizations:



### Local business leaders



# GOAL 1



## Objective 3: Design a communication campaign to show the effects of litter in the community.

The effects of litter are more than an eyesore on the area. A campaign to educate the community on the full effects will help to change population behavior. The campaign can educate based on effects such as the danger it poses to the animal population, natural environment, and road safety.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations:



### Action Items

1. Identify, measure, and photograph litter in the area  
*Timeline: 2020*
2. Identify the platform the campaign will take place in such as billboard, TV advertisement, social media, or multi-modal  
*Timeline: 2021*
3. Select the main focuses of the campaign such as beautification, environmental health, and/or highway safety (road debris)  
*Timeline: 2021*
4. Either use in house team, or agency to create the campaign and execute it  
*Timeline: 2021*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Number of impressions for marketing campaign
- Reduction in litter



## DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE FLOOD CONTROL STRATEGY, CREATING A SYSTEM FOR ASSESSING NEW OR REDEVELOPMENT IN KEY PROBLEM AREAS.

To maintain its quality of life as an environmentally sustainable community, Morehead-Rowan County must continue to improve partnerships between environmental organizations, increase public awareness and citizen engagement in sustainability practices, and continue to improve its management of floodplains associated with Triplett Creek. Flood control will ensure long-term livability and long-term sustainability.







## Objective 1: Work with key areas of Farmers Crest, 100 Year Line, North Fork, and Old 801 to identify flood control issues.

These key areas are those with historic flood issues and/or areas of large economic destruction in the case of a flood. Minimizing flood danger is essential to safety, quality of life, and the economy of Morehead and Rowan County. Each area will have to be addressed at the individual level due to the naturally different topography and the challenges that come from that.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations:



### Action Items

1. Identify stakeholders of the areas and those with access to flood related data

*Timeline: 2021*

2. Gather historic data on flooding in the area

*Timeline: 2021*

3. Conduct on site visit to analyze the topography and other natural factors impacting flooding

*Timeline: 2021*

4. Conduct analysis of data and factors from the site to identify the true issue impacting flood control

*Timeline: 2022*

5. Perform benefit analysis of incentives for property owners with land in flood prone areas to be used for public use, trails, or waterways

*Timeline: 2022*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Evaluation of flood areas
- Number of completed site visits
- Number of parcels identified for public use access



## Objective 2: Create a Rewards Rebate Program offering rebates to property owners who install RainScapes techniques such as rain gardens, rain barrels, conservation landscaping and other approved projects that help control stormwater in Downtown Morehead.

A comprehensive flood control system addresses water runoff at all levels including in neighborhoods and business centers. Techniques to absorb rainwater at the source are encouraged by the EPA and help provide healthier and happier neighborhoods and downtown districts. These techniques are broad and can be uniquely adapted to almost any situation or constraint.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations:



### Action Items

1. Define what counts as an eligible RainScape for rebate

*Timeline: 2022*

2. Determine the size of the rebate and if it is flat amount or variable based on amount of rain being mitigated

*Timeline: 2022*

3. Send out messaging to the households as well as hardware stores and landscaping companies so everyone is aware of the incentive and it can be effective

*Timeline: 2023*

4. Track the rebate program and adjust as needed to encourage different behaviors

*Timeline: 2023*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Rebate program development
- Number of rebates offered
- Reduction in flooding events



### Objective 3: Partner with businesses, city departments, and property owners to implement innovative stormwater solutions as demonstration projects.

For innovative stormwater solutions to be implemented, they need to be seen as a normal and popular thing to do. To do this, partnerships with businesses, city departments, and neighborhoods will help elevate the status and attention to these solutions. In addition, partners can help educate others and provide resources about how others can implement solutions at their residence or place of work.

#### Lead Organizations



#### Action Items

1. Determine what stormwater solutions should be highlighted and created as demonstrations  
*Timeline: 2022*
2. Identify places with high visibility and foot traffic so the demonstration will be seen by many  
*Timeline: 2022*
3. Reach out to identified locations and offer possible incentive such as rebate or cost sharing to be a demonstration site  
*Timeline: 2023*
4. Create signage that can be displayed at the demonstration site explaining what it is, why it is beneficial, and how people can recreate it at their own home or business  
*Timeline: 2023*

#### Partner Organizations:



#### Evaluation Measures:

- Number of demonstration projects
- Incentives offered
- Reduction in flooding issues



## ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**Goal 1: Identify areas of future growth in the County and prioritize and invest in infrastructure to support that growth with a focus on road improvements, water, wastewater, and broadband.**

Objectives:

1. Review development processes and specifications related to housing, commercial, and industrial development to ensure adequate infrastructure to support new development.
2. Implement last mile broadband to residents and businesses throughout the County, prioritizing existing development areas and identifying potential growth areas that may need service at some point over the plan period.
3. Update Facilities Plan to address potential need for water and wastewater treatment plant expansions.

**Goal 2: Leverage existing assets and new investments to attract and grow diverse, quality businesses, prioritizing the identified target industries.**

Objectives:

1. Develop a plan for growth at the Morehead-Rowan County Airport in order to attract new businesses and uses that can utilize this asset.
2. Create sector strategies for business attraction efforts around medical device, aerospace, automotive manufacturing, and other high-tech manufacturing.
3. Identify business attraction opportunities that support supply chains of new businesses in agribusiness and wood production.
4. Develop a plan to activate investment in the Rowan County’s Opportunity Zone through planning efforts that organize and market investment grade projects.

**S**

- Cake Run Lake
- Available land at the Industrial Park
- Airport proximity
- Education
- University Farm
- Rajant, Morehead State University, and R&D Talent

**W**

- Infrastructure (housing)
- Livability
- Innovation
- Availability of flat land throughout the county

**O**

- Distillery development
- Space Science Center
- Downtown identity: hotel, retail
- Natural resources: Timber
- Small business creation

**T**

- Workforce availability
- Slow pace of development
- Brain drain
- Planning/zoning



## **IDENTIFY AREAS OF FUTURE GROWTH IN THE COUNTY AND PRIORITIZE AND INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THAT GROWTH WITH A FOCUS ON ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, WATER, WASTEWATER, AND BROADBAND.**

Adequate infrastructure in key areas of Rowan County is needed to spur quality growth. Many areas of the county are suitable for new housing, commercial, and residential development, but improved planning can help target areas for certain types of growth. Identifying areas of focus within the county and targeting potential development types will help determine infrastructure needs. This will allow for infrastructure planning and mitigate risk for some new development. Key infrastructure priorities should focus on extending last mile broadband to high growth development areas and ensuring water and wastewater treatment capacity in certain areas of the county.



# GOAL I



## Objective 1: Review development processes and specifications related to housing, commercial, and industrial development to ensure adequate infrastructure to support new development.

As new development occurs, particularly in areas of Rowan County where zoning is not in place, adequate permitting processes are key to helping guarantee the right mix of uses and adequate infrastructure. Identifying the key areas of growth can help maximize infrastructure investment by prioritizing systems in certain areas. A comprehensive review of development areas can also help plan appropriate uses for certain areas to encourage positive consistent growth throughout the county.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations:



### Action Items

1. Review local permitting process and identify opportunities to streamline for developers and county staff.  
*Timeline: 2020*
2. Identify priority development locations and sites for residential, commercial, and industrial development.  
*Timeline: 2021*
3. Assess infrastructure capacity to these areas and determine gaps that could slow development.  
*Timeline: 2021*
4. After identifying gaps, work with local officials to understand specific infrastructure improvements and financing solutions.  
*Timeline: 2022*
5. Engage local developers/builders on identified development opportunities and determine public/private roles for addressing remaining infrastructure gaps.  
*Timeline: 2022*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed permitting process review
- Priority development areas identified
- Infrastructure capacity assessment completed
- Number of local developers engaged
- Number of new development



## Objective 2: Implement last mile broadband to residents and businesses throughout the County, prioritizing existing development areas and identifying potential growth areas that may need service at some point over the plan period.

Broadband is a critical aspect of infrastructure for all types of development. As communities look to become more connected, high-speed internet access is vital for attracting businesses and residents. Morehead-Rowan County invested in broadband throughout the county as part of the KentuckyWired program. However, the last mile connections to homes and businesses is a critical issue to solve. Additionally, the county should plan for broadband infrastructure in the identified areas of future residential and business growth.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations:



Local broadband providers



### Action Items

1. Identify areas of projected growth which will likely align with identified sites for commercial, residential, and industrial development

*Timeline: 2021*

2. Work with local broadband providers to determine impediments to connecting future development sites and existing residents and businesses with last mile broadband

*Timeline: 2022*

3. From these conversations, identify ways that the county can further incentivize broadband development

*Timeline: 2022*

4. Consider creating a publicly owned broadband network if private providers are not willing/able to close existing service gaps.

*Timeline: 2023*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed broadband needs assessment
- Miles of new broadband infrastructure



### Objective 3: Update Facilities Plan to address potential need for water and wastewater treatment plant expansions.

Ensuring adequate water and wastewater capacity to support continued growth will be critical for the county's future. As new development has occurred outside of the City of Morehead limits, additional capacity is needed in areas of Rowan County. A recent study of water system capacity identified the need for an additional water treatment plant. The Morehead Utility Plant Board is proposing a new plant on Cave Run Lake. Less critically, a wastewater treatment plant expansion is also needed with some efforts to reduce use in order to delay expansion date.

#### Lead Organizations



**Rowan Water, Inc.**



#### Partner Organizations



#### Action Items

1. Complete a study to assess current and projected water and wastewater capacity needs

*Timeline: 2020*

2. Based on findings, determine upgrades/facility expansion needed to accommodate future demand

*Timeline: 2020*

3. Determine financial requirements and financing strategies to expand existing wastewater facilities

*Timeline: 2021*

4. Include financing and implementation strategies for a new wastewater treatment plant in updated Facilities Plan.

*Timeline: 2021*

5. Begin implementing updated Facilities Plan

*Timeline: 2022*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed Facilities Plan
- Completed wastewater treatment plant
- Ongoing water and wastewater capacity measures





## **LEVERAGE EXISTING ASSETS AND NEW INVESTMENTS TO ATTRACT AND GROW DIVERSE, QUALITY BUSINESSES, PRIORITIZING THE IDENTIFIED TARGET INDUSTRIES.**

The City of Morehead and Rowan County are well positioned for economic growth. With new major investments from AppHarvest an innovative agribusiness firm, building a sustainable greenhouse and Independent Stave Company, a cooperage firm, businesses are seeing the benefits of locating in Rowan County. The county offers many assets to build on. These resources can help grow new and existing industries which will help solidify Rowan County as the major employment hub for the Eastern Kentucky region. Key assets include the Morehead-Rowan County Airport, Morehead State University and its specialized programs, the Rowan Campus of Maysville Community and Technical College, and the County's Opportunity Zone.



## GOAL 2



### Objective 1: Develop a plan for growth at the Morehead-Rowan County Airport in order to attract new businesses and uses that can utilize this asset.

The Morehead-Rowan County Clyde A. Thomas Regional Airport opened in 2007 and includes a 5,500-foot runway with room to grow. The airport is currently evaluating how to appropriately expand business opportunities at the airport and throughout the county. Potential strategies include expanding the runway length, attracting corporate hangars, developing the airport as a hub for maintenance activities, and connecting with Maysville Community and Technical College for workforce related training applications.

#### Lead Organizations



#### Partner Organizations:



#### Action Items

1. Assess the types of businesses that frequently utilize the Morehead-Rowan County Airport to understand which businesses benefit most from the airport

*Timeline: 2021*

2. Identify properties surrounding the airport that could be acquired to support a business park tied to the airport

*Timeline: 2021*

3. Create a development plan and business attraction strategy for identified properties near the airport that could be developed as a business park

*Timeline: 2021*

4. Identify financing strategies to develop a business park tied to that airport

*Timeline: 2022*

5. Form public/private partnerships to begin developing an airport business park

*Timeline: 2022*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Completed airport master plan
- New businesses attracted
- New jobs created

## GOAL 2



### Objective 2: Create sector strategies for business attraction efforts around medical device, aerospace, automotive manufacturing, and other high-tech manufacturing.

Business attraction activities in Morehead and Rowan County should focus on growing and well-established industries. High-tech manufacturing is a key focus as innovation in this sector continues to produce growth. The surrounding region is already well established as a hub for automotive and related parts manufacturing while local research and assets including Morehead State University's Space Science Center could help spur additional investments in the aerospace industry. Medical devices and related components while not currently present in the county, represent a new opportunity as a national growing industry and one that has recently shown interest in investing in the county. More information on these targeted industries can be found in Appendix A.

#### Lead Organizations



#### Partner Organizations:



#### Action Items

1. Develop marketing materials highlighting pro-business conditions of Morehead-Rowan County for targeted industries  
*Timeline: 2021*
2. Identify specific targeted industry businesses showing signs of expansion such as: significant employment growth, investing heavily in R&D, investing heavily in capital, or require additional real estate  
*Timeline: 2021*
3. Reach out to identified businesses using marketing materials to begin ongoing conversations about doing business in Morehead-Rowan County  
*Timeline: 2021*
4. Identify and attend conferences for targeted industry businesses to build contacts and market opportunities in the county  
*Timeline: 2022*

#### Evaluation Measures:

- Number of marketing materials developed
- Number of prospects
- Number of conferences attended
- New businesses attracted
- New jobs created



## Objective 3: Identify business attraction opportunities that support supply chains of new businesses in agribusiness and wood production.

Efforts to leverage the new investments from AppHarvest and Independent Stave Company should first focus on identifying supply chain connections that could benefit from locating close to these businesses. Establishing communication with suppliers can help market the benefits for operating in Morehead Rowan County. Additionally, developing a marketing strategy for attracting businesses in related businesses can help build out sector strengths in these areas.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations



Local businesses



### Action Items

1. Engage new agribusiness and wood production business through interviews/focus groups to understand their supply chains

*Timeline: 2020*

2. Identify where companies are making out of region purchases and what types of good/services they are purchasing

*Timeline: 2021*

3. Identify businesses that address supply chain gaps and show indicators of expanding or relocating

*Timeline: 2021*

4. Develop a marketing strategy to reach out to identified expanding businesses that address supply chain needs

*Timeline: 2021*

5. Identify local champions to lead and begin outreach to business leads

*Timeline: 2021*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Number of businesses interviewed/engaged
- Number of potential prospective businesses
- Completed marketing strategy
- Number of potential prospective businesses engaged
- New businesses attracted
- New jobs created



## Objective 4: Develop a plan to activate investment in the Rowan County’s Opportunity Zone through planning efforts that organize and market investment grade projects.

Opportunity Zones are a new economic development tool that promotes investment in distressed census tracts through legislation enacted by the Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. The program allows a deferral and reduction in capital gains allowing investment in business growth, housing improvements, and infrastructure updates. Rowan County has one Opportunity Zone that extends through parts of Downtown Morehead and into the surrounding county, running along east to west along I-64. Additional details on the county’s OZ can be found in Appendix A.

### Lead Organizations



### Partner Organizations



### Action Items

1. Assess county and regional real-estate markets to understand commercial, residential, and industrial gaps

*Timeline: 2021*

2. Determine locations for development/redevelopment within the county’s Opportunity Zone that could capitalize on market opportunities

*Timeline: 2021*

3. Engage property owners to determine availability of identified site

*Timeline: 2021*

4. Create an investment prospectus that describes each site as an investment grade opportunity

*Timeline: 2022*

5. Identify and market the prospectus to national opportunity funds with investment objectives that align with identified projects

*Timeline: 2022*

6. Engage financial leadership and investors in the county about forming a socially driven local opportunity fund that could invest in prospectus projects

*Timeline: 2023*

### Evaluation Measures:

- Number of property owners engaged
- Number of potential investment-grade projects
- Completed investment prospectus
- Number of OZ funds engaged
- Number of projects completed
- Amount of local funds invested





## APPENDIX A: FOCUS AREA ASSESSMENTS



## OVERVIEW

The following analysis provides background information and data regarding existing conditions in the City of Morehead and Rowan County. Following a high-level overview of the population and demographics in the city and county, the analysis is broken into five key areas of focus as defined below.

In addition to data analysis and research, insights from community stakeholders in each of the five top areas were gathered via focus groups, interviews and surveys. The key findings are described within each focus area and represent current assets, challenges, priorities, and strategies around each focus area. Overall, sessions highlighted unique perspectives and identified information for the SWOT exercise on every focus area.

## FOCUS AREAS

A resilient community is one that aligns community, economic, and talent development to create long-term sustainable economic growth and quality of life. The Morehead-Rowan County Community and Economic Development Strategy aims to incorporate several different factors that affect the overall health of a community into a broad plan for growth. These factors are incorporated into one of five different focus areas.



### HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY



### LIVABILITY AND RECREATION



### EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



### ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Each focus area contributes to one aspect of building a resilient community, by ensuring health, wellness, safety, education, economic growth, and overall livability. Understanding the current conditions of these components will lay the foundation for identifying gaps and outstanding needs and developing the integrated strategies needed to tackle those gaps.

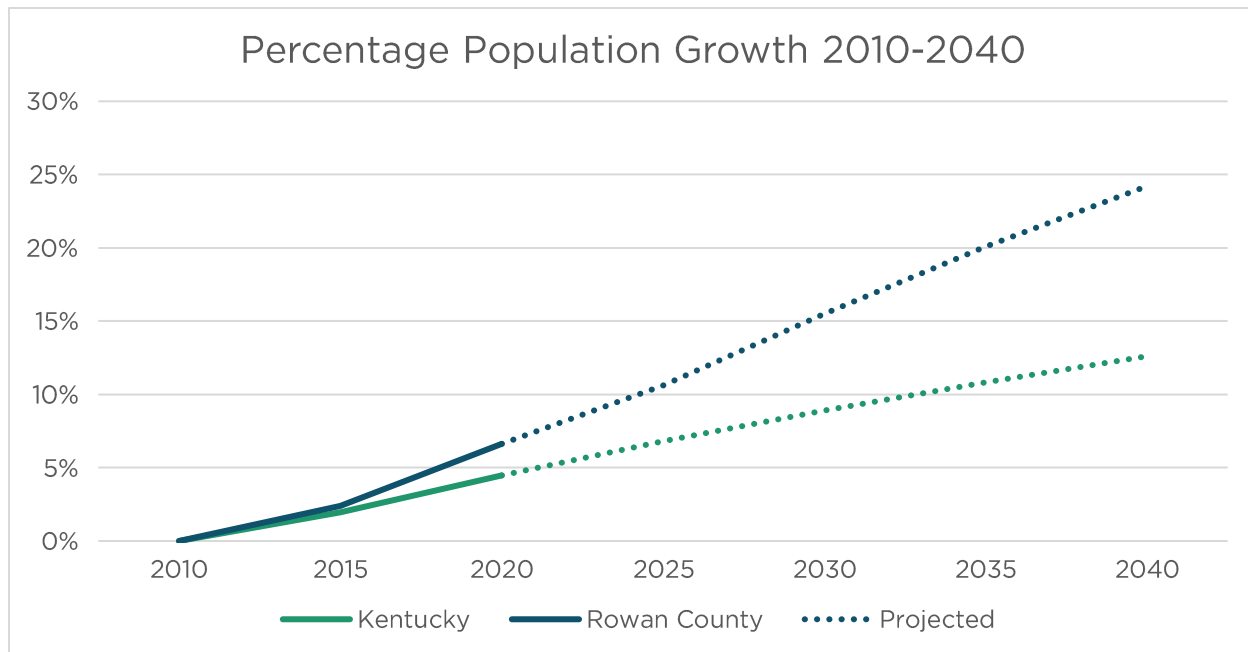




# DEMOGRAPHICS

## Population

Between 2015 and 2040, the population of Kentucky is projected to grow 10.4% – from 4,425,092 to 4,886,381, which is a gain of 461,289 people. Of Kentucky’s 120 counties, 79 (66%) are projected to exhibit declines in total population between 2015 and 2040. Rowan County is one of only 41 counties projected to exhibit population growth between 2015 and 2040. Specifically, the county is projected to grow 16% from 2020 to 2040, in about 2% increments.



Source: Annual Population Estimates 2010-2017, American Fact Finder. Population Projections, Kentucky State Data Center, 2016

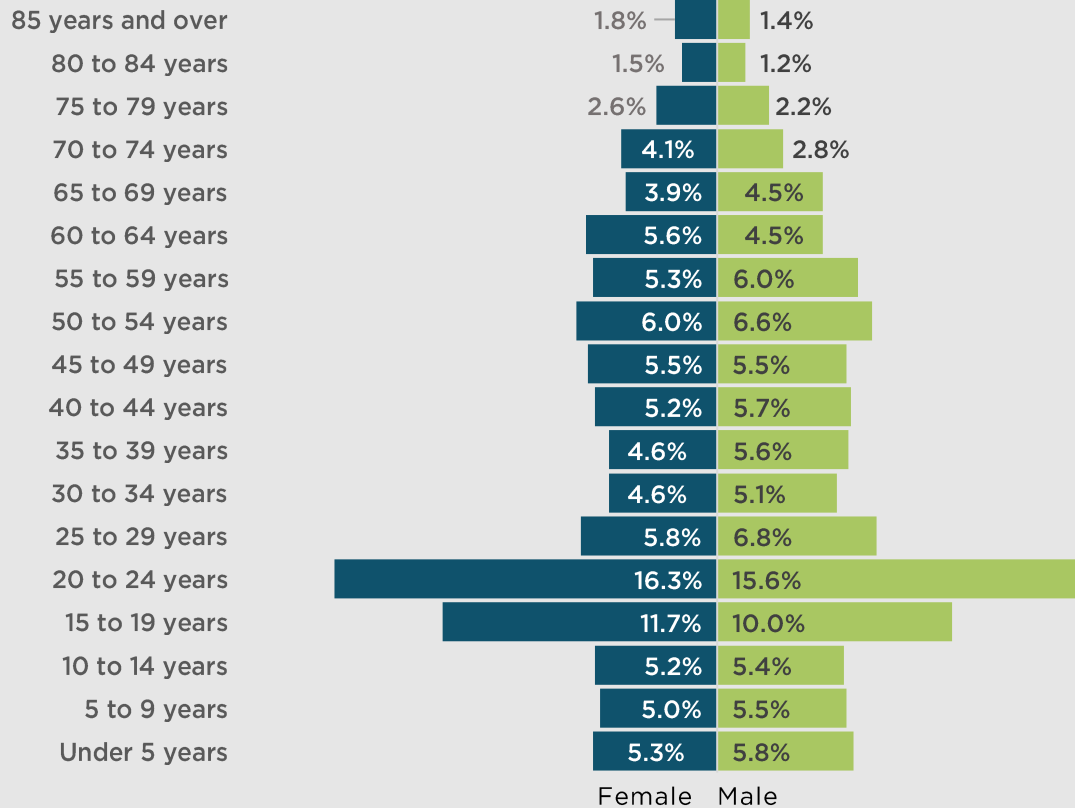
## Age

Rowan County’s population is significantly younger compared to the rest of Kentucky and the nation. The county’s median age of 30.7 is lower than both the national median age of 37.8 and Kentucky’s median age of 38.3. Specifically, the City of Morehead’s median age is 22.2, notably younger than Rowan County’s. About 16% of the population is between the ages of 20 to 24 and about 10% is between the ages of 15 to 19 years of age. The lower median age could be related to the enrollment at Morehead State University. Specifically, 10,584 students were enrolled at the University in 2017, contributing to the City’s population of 7,663 individuals.<sup>2</sup> Of the 10,584 students, 6,481 were enrolled at MSU’s main campus.

<sup>2</sup> Morehead State University OIRA Profile, 2017-2018. Accessed From: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/morehead.state.university>.



## Rowan County Population Pyramid



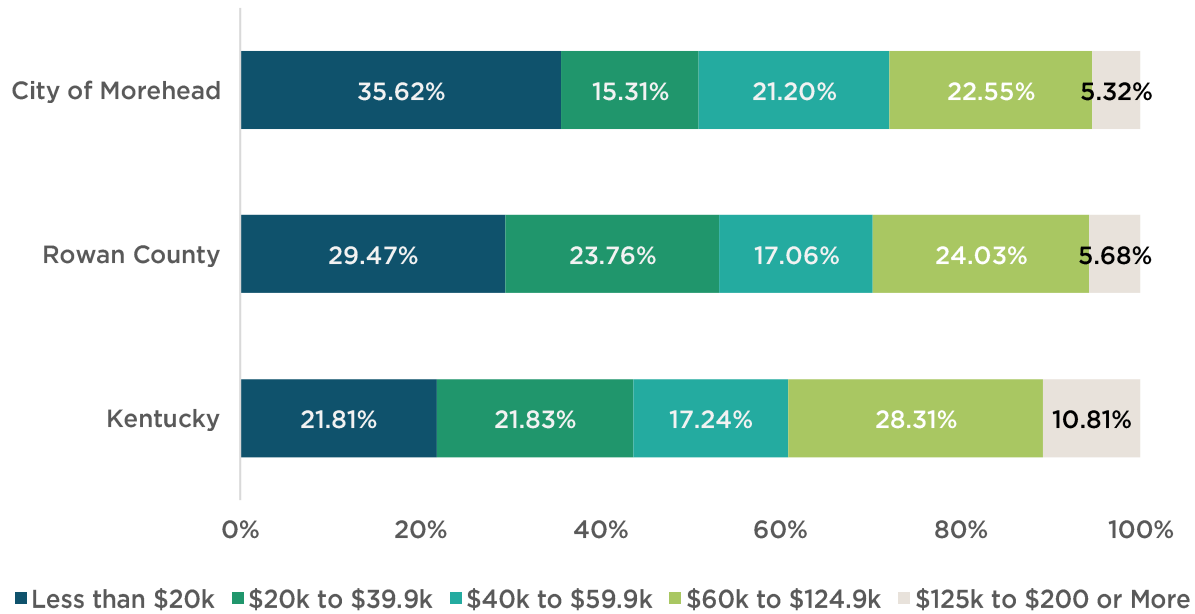
Source: US Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S0101

## Income

Looking at the percentage of households in each income bracket as shown in the graph below, 35.62% of households in Morehead make less than \$20,000 a year. However, this same threshold represents just 29.47% of the households in Rowan County. The median income for Rowan County is \$36,411, while the City of Morehead median income is \$39,091. Overall, the student population has a significant impact on the income distribution. The median income for individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 is \$15,559.



### Percent of Households by Income



Source: US Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B19001

### Race

Rowan County is a homogeneous county, with 96% of its residents identifying as White alone. This is higher than both the national average and Kentucky, which are 73% and 87% respectively. The next largest demographic groups identify as Black or African American alone (1%) and Asian alone (1%). The City of Morehead has a similar makeup of residents, with 93% of residents identifying as White alone. The next largest demographic groups identify as Black or African American alone (3%) and Asian alone (2%).



## HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY

The following focus area provides an overview of several dimensions of health, wellness, and safety. Specifically, it examines health outcomes, costs, and resources for residents of the county, poverty, and crime statistics.

According to County Health Rankings, Rowan County ranks 38<sup>th</sup> out of 120 counties in Kentucky on Health Outcomes. This ranking includes length of life, quality of life, mortality, HIV prevalence, and diabetes prevalence.

### SWOT

S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe community</li> <li>• Variety of health and wellness services</li> <li>• Employment opportunities for students in health related industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road safety: no shoulders on major roads</li> <li>• Access to fresh foods</li> <li>• Prevalence of health issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior based programming</li> <li>• Sharing of resources</li> <li>• Rails to trails</li> <li>• Sidewalks and biking paths</li> <li>• Telemedicine</li> <li>• Partnerships on big data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortage of medical professionals</li> <li>• Staffing of medical and fire response teams</li> </ul>

### HEALTH COSTS

Below is a table overviewing standardized medical spending in Rowan County. Overall, costs of services are lower than the state. One significant difference is the cost of hospice, which is 38% lower than Kentucky. Additionally, the cost of durable medical equipment is 41% higher than the state. The national level of spending on durable medical equipment is \$173. Rowan County ranks 8<sup>th</sup> in the state for this cost, which can be related to aging, disease, or a combination of health-related factors. This medical equipment is referring to wheelchairs (manual and electric), hospital beds, traction equipment, canes,

Cost Type	County	State	% Difference to Kentucky
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,565</b>	<b>\$9,815</b>	<b>-3%</b>
Inpatient	\$2,824	\$2,970	-5%
Post-Acute Care	\$1,468	\$1,735	-15%
Hospice	\$134	\$218	-38%
Physician/OPD/Tests/Imaging	\$3,923	\$3,793	3%
Durable Medical Equipment	\$323	\$229	41%
Part B Drug	\$187	\$315	-41%
Ambulance	\$194	\$175	11%



crutches, walkers, kidney machines, ventilators, oxygen, monitors, pressure mattresses, lifts, and nebulizers.

In 2017, the uninsured rate in the US reversed course and, for the first time since the passage of the ACA, rose significantly to 10.2%. Rowan County has an estimated 7% of the population uninsured. This is slightly higher than the state uninsured rate of 6%.<sup>3</sup> In 2017, 45% of uninsured adults said that they remained uninsured because the cost of coverage was too high. Many people do not have access to coverage through a job, and some people, particularly low-income adults in states that did not expand Medicaid, remain ineligible for financial assistance for coverage. One in five uninsured adults in 2017 went without needed medical care due to cost. Studies repeatedly demonstrate that the uninsured are less likely than those with insurance to receive preventive care and services for major health conditions and chronic diseases.<sup>3</sup>

## HEALTH OUTCOMES

Behavioral health focuses on individual and community lifestyle behaviors and aspects of a social environment that affect health. Four indicators of Rowan County’s health – physical activity, binge drinking, smoking, and hypertension – are closely aligned with the state’s averages. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kentucky State Department of Health found that binge drinking is slightly higher (4%) than in the state. Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks on one occasion for males and having four or more drinks on one occasion for females.<sup>4</sup>



28% of adults lack the daily needed physical activity



19% of adults binge drink



26% of adults in the county smoke



39% prevalence of hypertension in the county

Source: CMS Chronic Conditions Warehouse 2013-2017, <http://ccwdata.org/index.php>

However, Rowan had a higher rate of deaths related to heart disease, stroke, and cancer than the state between 2012 and 2016. Below are the number of deaths per 100,000 population in Rowan County, with state rates in parentheses.<sup>4</sup>

- 211 Heart Disease deaths (KY 197)

<sup>3</sup> Henry J Kaiser Family Foundation, Facts about the Uninsured, 2018. Accessed from: <https://www.kff.org/uninsured/fact-sheet/key-facts-about-the-uninsured-population/>.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kentucky Department for Public Health. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Data as analyzed at the county level by the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Control Program and College of Public Health



- 64 Stroke Deaths (KY 40)
- 232 Cancer Deaths (KY 197)

## HEALTH RESOURCES

Rowan County has 15 searchable health-related offices, all located in the County’s largest city – Morehead. Local health care jobs made up 16.1% of total employment in Rowan County in 2010.<sup>5</sup> Health resources vary from home health care services, medical clinics, mental health services, to resources serving specific populations. Specific specialists and family doctors are concentrated in Morehead, but primarily work from the offices listed below. Additionally, St. Claire HealthCare offers inpatient and outpatient services, and is the primary hospital servicing Rowan County. The net search did not pull health-related resources from other locations within the County.

NAME	TYPE	ADDRESS	PHONE
St. Claire Home Health	Home Health Care Service	135 N. Hargis Ave, Morehead KY 40351	606-784-8403
Personal Touch Home Health Care	Home Health Care Service	255 Old Flemingsburg Rd, Morehead KY 40351	606-780-0802
St. Claire HealthCare	Medical Center	222 Medical Circle, Morehead KY 40351	606-783-6500
KDMS Health Plus	Medical Clinic	255 Old Viking Dr., Morehead, KY 40351	606-784-2774
VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic	Medical Clinic	333 Beacon Hill Rd, Morehead KY 40351	606-784-3004
Morehead Clinic	Medical Clinic	234 Medical Circle, Morehead KY 40351	606-784-6641
St. Claire Counseling	Mental Health Service	445 Clinic Dr., Morehead, KY 40351	606-783-6805
Pathways Inc	Mental Health Service	321 E Main St, Morehead, KY 40351	606-784-4161
Mountain Comprehensive Care Center	Mental Health Service	1034 E Main St. Morehead, KY 40351	606-784-4800
Life Care Center of Morehead	Nursing Home	933 N Tolliver Rd, Morehead KY 40351	606-784-7518
Saint Claire Regional Center Psychotherapy	Psychotherapy	222 Medical Circle, Morehead KY 40351	606-783-6661
Rowan County Health Center	Public Health Department	730 W Main St., Morehead, KY 40351	606-784-8954
Health & Family Services	Social Services Organization	1415 Old US Hwy 60 Morehead, KY 40351	606-783-8545

<sup>5</sup> Kentucky Health Facts, 2015-2017. Accessed from: <http://www.kentuckyhealthfacts.org/data/location/show.aspx?cat=2%2c3%2c5&loc=103>.



NAME	TYPE	ADDRESS	PHONE
UK Morehead Women's Healthcare	Women's Health Clinic	555 W Sun St., Morehead KY 40351	606-207-2931
Hope Pregnancy Care Center	Women's Health Clinic	167 E Main St Morehead KY, 40351	606-784-2488

## POVERTY

It is estimated that 5,686 of a total 21,274 residents are in poverty within Rowan County. This equates to an estimated 26.7% of Rowan County's population living in poverty, which exceeds the national poverty level by 12.1 percentage points and the state rate by 8.4 percentage points. The City of Morehead sees a significantly higher number (34.3%) of individuals below poverty level. Poverty remains one of the best predictors of outcomes for kids. It is connected to homelessness, which results in instability and trauma for children. Children's health is affected by poverty whether through environmental issues, such as high levels of lead in older housing, or hunger and poor nutrition.<sup>6</sup> Of the 5,686 citizens of Rowan County who live in poverty, about a third (33.5%) are children under the age of 18.

## CRIME RATES

According to the Kentucky State Police, a crime is committed in Rowan County approximately every 7 hours. In 2018, the County had 1,170 Group-A Offenses and 1,535 Group-B Offenses. According to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), offenses are either Group A or Group B type. There are 22 Group A offense categories comprised of 46 Group A offenses and 10 Group B offense categories including 10 Group B offenses. Law enforcement agencies report Group A offenses as part of a NIBRS incident report, but they report only arrest data for Group B offenses.<sup>7</sup>

Offense	Amount	Type
Larceny/Theft Offenses	286	Group A
Drug/Narcotic Offenses	281	Group A
Assault Offenses	199	Group A
Forcible Sex Offenses	87	Group A
Burglary/Breaking and Entering	58	Group A
Drunkenness	224	Group B
DUI	148	Group B
All Other	1,063	Group B

Crime in Rowan County is relatively low compared to the state of Kentucky. A serious crime was committed approximately every two minutes in Kentucky in 2018.

*Source: Kentucky State Police, Crime in Kentucky 2018*

<sup>6</sup> Kids Count in Michigan data book (2018) *Kids Count*. Accessed at: <https://mlpp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2018-kids-count-in-mi-data-book.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> National Incident-Based Reporting System, 2012. Accessed from: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/nibrs/2012/resources/crimes-against-persons-property-and-society>



Specifically, arrests for crimes in 2018 totaled 520,074.<sup>8</sup> Offenses in Rowan County align with offenses of Kentucky, with the most frequent being Larceny and Theft. Differing levels of citizen awareness and their responsibility to report crimes have a direct impact on the number of reports received by police.

## FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Focus group participants included a cross section of individuals in the community working on these issues, including representatives from St. Claire Regional Medical Center, Morehead State University, Gateway Area health District, Rowan County Emergency Management, and City of Morehead Police and Fire Departments.

Participants were asked to rate the quality of health, wellness, and safety in Rowan County. Most agreed that the county is comparable to the surrounding region when it comes to health and wellness. However, indicators of cancer, tobacco, and prescription drugs remain high. Other health and wellness concerns include access to fresh food, vaccinations, and the need for staff. The prevalence of obesity, overdoses, and other related health issues is a key priority for health professionals in the county.

Opportunities to address these issues include resource sharing and partnerships amongst health institutions. Building partnerships related to big data and improving the ability to share health information could help improve health outcomes. Other recommendations included increased mental health resources in schools and emphasizing telemedicine. The county also needs to better communicate and disseminate existing health resources to residents in the community.

The development of new recreational health facilities, including bike trails, sidewalks, and rail trails could build upon existing resources, including the recent conversion of the Laughlin Health Building on Morehead State University into a public use facility.

One key concern for health and wellness is the need for health care professionals, particularly nurses and specialists. Morehead State University and the University of Kentucky Medical School Morehead campus are both key resources for the health institutions to recruit staff, but better messaging of the post-graduate opportunities in health care in Morehead could help retain more students.

Key concerns related to safety in Morehead and Rowan County concern staffing emergency response and fire services. Morehead and Rowan County rely on a volunteer fire department, which could be a challenge as the city and the county continue to grow. Additionally, the increased cost of certification for emergency response professionals has made recruiting more individuals difficult. Innovative solutions to staffing challenges include utilizing Morehead State University students and potentially creating a co-op programs that offers student housing in exchange for service in the fire department.

<sup>8</sup> Kentucky State Police, Crime in Kentucky 2018. Accessed from: <http://kentuckystatepolice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/2018-Crime-In-Kentucky-compressed.pdf>.





Other safety concerns voiced by participants include roads with narrow or no shoulders and large culverts where multiple accidents have taken place.

Participants stressed the need for quicker response times. Additionally, the participants offered suggestions on how to address concerns, including weighing the pros and cons of full time versus volunteer staff, as well as building partnerships with neighboring communities.



## LIVABILITY AND RECREATION

The interconnection between livability and recreation with Morehead and Rowan County is clear. Many of the recreation assets in the community, including Cave Run Lake and the Sheltoewe Trace Trail also act as key tourism drivers for attracting visitors to the county. Investments and growth in downtown Morehead can be seen as both a tool for increasing livability as well as a tourism anchor for the city.

However, there are some livability challenges in the community. In particular, the county lacks diverse housing of all types and price points. The majority of the existing housing in the city and the county is valued at less than \$100,000 with no upper-scale housing valued over \$500,000. The median age of housing in the county is 1986 and only 1% of homes have been built since 2014. This indicates a potential need for new housing throughout the county to better attract residents and a workforce to the community.

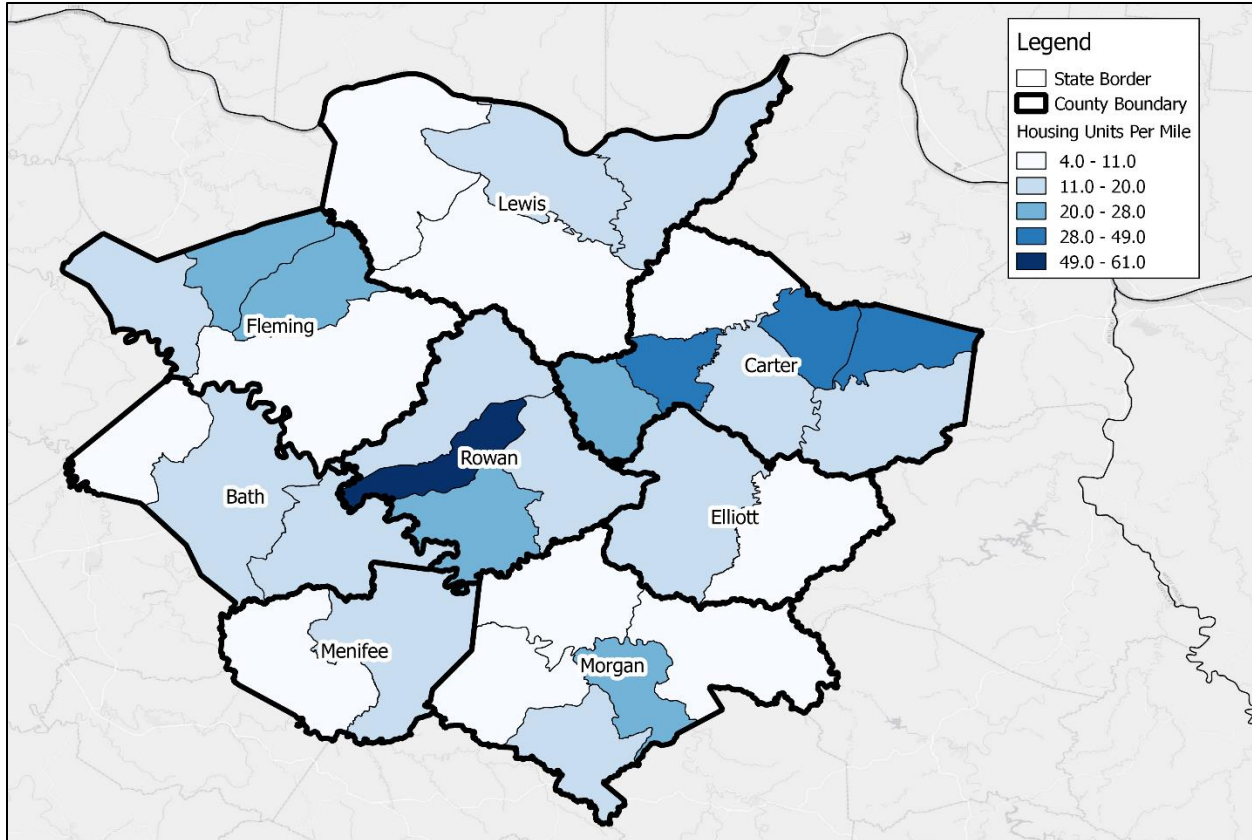
### SWOT

S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•National Forest</li> <li>•Trails</li> <li>•Sheltoewe Trace NRT</li> <li>•Laughlin Health Building</li> <li>•Variety of opportunities to be active</li> <li>•Bike/Recreation Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Promotion of community assets</li> <li>•Consensus around process for development</li> <li>•Community and Local resident Involvement with Planned Events and Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Downtown development and engagement</li> <li>•Utilizing water sources for recreation: Triplett Creek, Licking River, Fish Hatchery</li> <li>•Access to mountains and trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Competitors with strong draws to visit</li> <li>•Lack of partnership around development</li> <li>•Weather and seasonal population</li> </ul>

## HOUSING ASSESSMENT

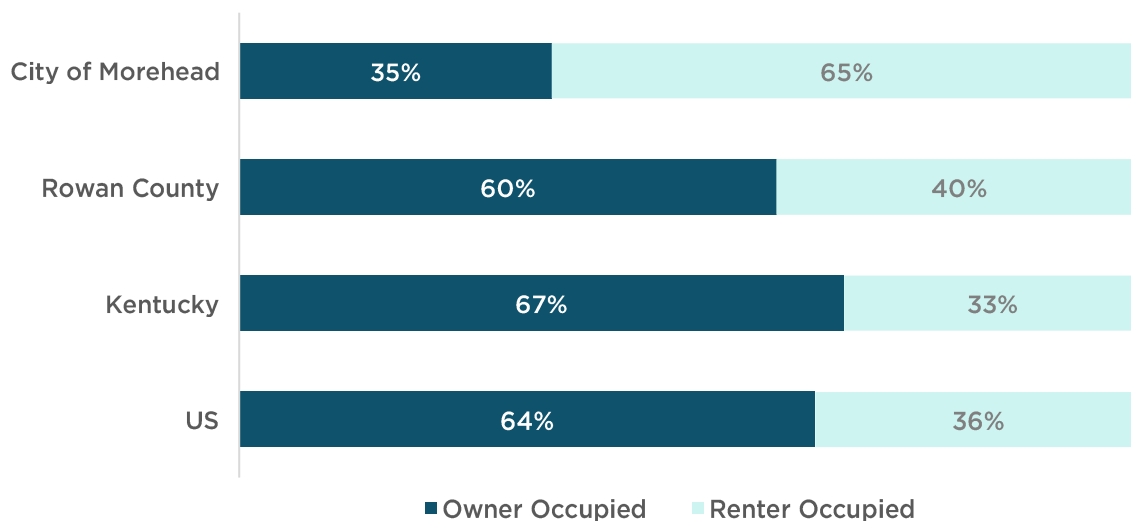
Rowan County has about 10,254 total housing units throughout the County. The overall density of housing in the county is relatively low, ranging from around 20 homes per square mile in the north and southeast census tracts to around 61 homes per square mile in the center of the county along I-64. This low density is likely due to the large amount of land preserved by the United States Forest Service in the Daniel Boone National forest.

Despite this low density, the county and in particular the census tract encompassing Morehead has by far the highest housing density in the surrounding region, highlighting the county's position as a residential hub and economic driver in this region of Eastern Kentucky. Housing density by census tract for Rowan, Lewis, Fleming, Bath, Menifee, Morgan, Elliott, and Carter counties can be seen in the map below.



Of these housing units in Rowan County, 14.4% are vacant. The City of Morehead has a slightly lower vacancy rate of 8.1%. Owner-occupied housing represents 60% of total county housing stock, compared to only 35% in Morehead. These rates are both lower than that of the state and the nation.

### Occupancy Status (Renter vs. Owner)



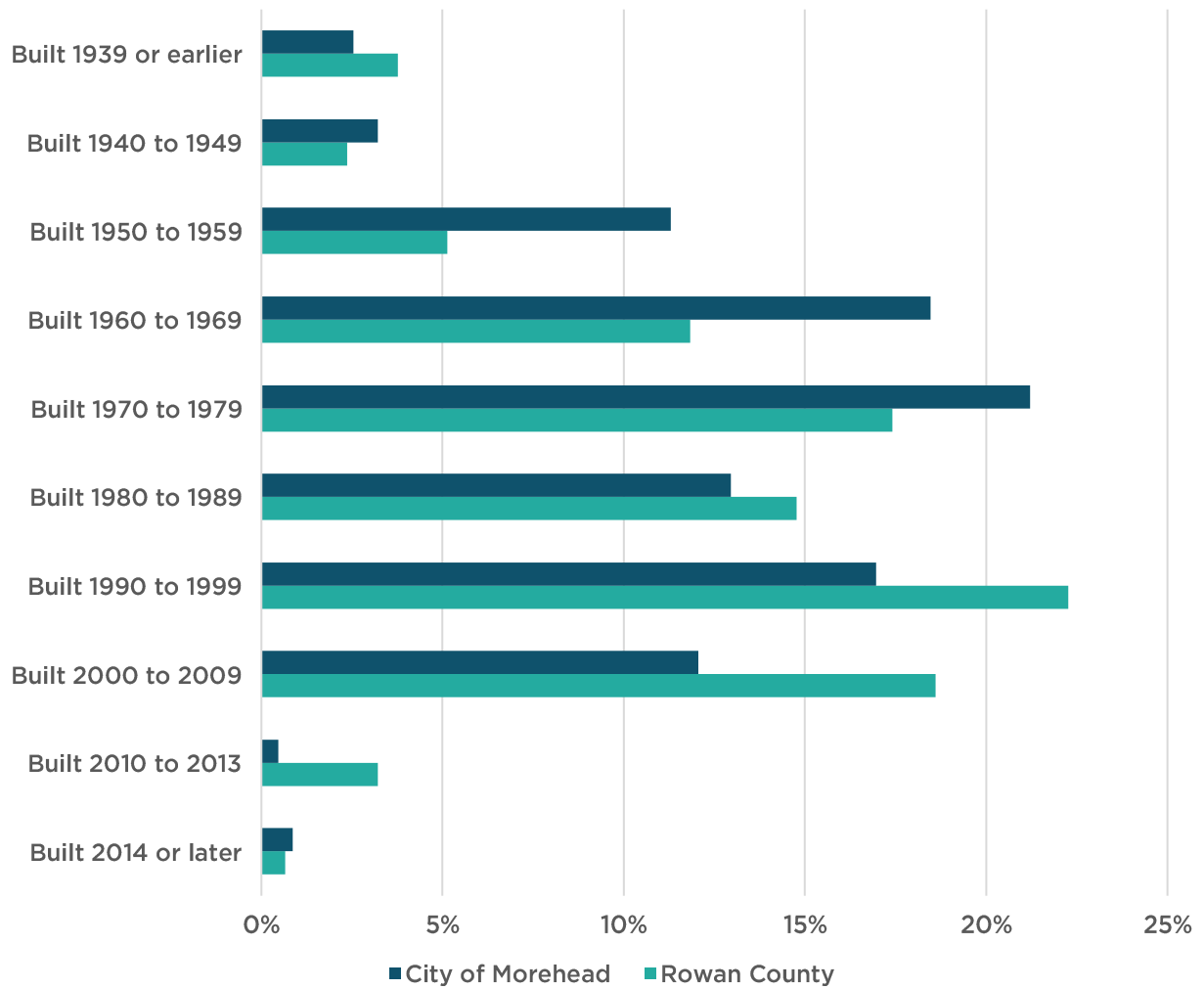
Source: US Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B25003



## Age

Overall, the age of housing stock looks similar in Rowan County and the City of Morehead. A few notable areas of difference are the higher number of houses built between 1950 and 1959 in the City of Morehead. Specifically, the City of Morehead seems to have an older housing stock than Rowan County as a whole. The majority of housing units built between 2010 and 2013 are not in the City. The age discrepancy is further revealed when analyzing the median age of housing in Rowan and Morehead. Rowan County's median year structure built is 1986, while the City of Morehead's is 1977.

### Housing Units by Age and Location



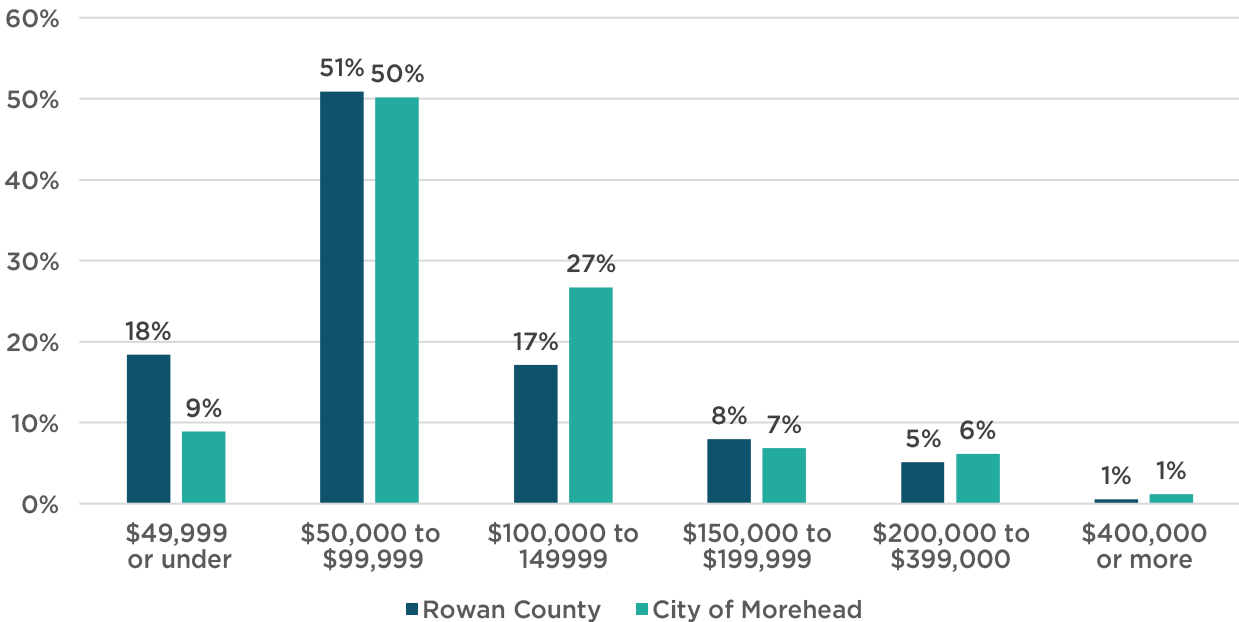
Source: US Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B25024



## Value

According to ACS 5-Year Estimates from 2017, the median home value in Rowan County is \$121,000. The median value of homes in the City of Morehead is significantly higher, at \$170,500. This is a significant jump from the 2009 median values of \$85,900 in Rowan County, and \$108,400 in the city. A large portion of the homes in these areas are within the \$50,000-\$150,000 range. While only 1% of housing represents a value over \$400,000 or more, no houses are shown to be over \$500,000 in either the city or the county.

### Home Value Distribution



## RECREATIONAL AND NATURAL ASSETS

Recreational and natural resources are found throughout the County and the City of Morehead. These assets serve both community members and tourists and include local and regional destinations. Development, enhancement, and connectivity between the existing recreational and natural assets will provide opportunities that are unique to Rowan County and the City of Morehead.

The 708,000-acre Daniel Boone National Forest spreads across 21 counties in southern and eastern Kentucky. Approximately 126,500 acres of the National Forest lies within Rowan County. A number of natural and recreational assets are located in the Forest and primarily managed by the United States Forest Service Cumberland Ranger District.

The 8,270-acre Cave Run Lake, widely known for its outdoor recreation opportunities, is located on the southwestern border of Rowan County. The US Army Corp of Engineers operates the earthen dam constructed across the Licking River to create the lake and manages three day-use recreation areas near the dam. The US Forest Service manages the Twin Knobs Recreation Area, Scott's Creek Marina, and additional boat ramps and fishing areas located on the Lake.



The Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail is considered the backbone of the Daniel Boone National Forest’s extensive trail system, and its northern terminus is in Rowan County. This 319-mile trail connects points of interest within the Forest and travels along Main Street in Downtown Morehead, the only community that is located directly on the trail.

Athletic facilities at Morehead City Park Complex, Zane Collins Memorial Park, and Rodburn Elementary School in combination with the Rowan County School Complex and Clearfield Elementary School provide active recreation facilities in the area. Natural areas and parks located within the City and not far from downtown include Eagle Lake, Rodburn Hollow Park, Morehead Memorial Tree Park, and the Boone Holland Wetlands and Nature Trail.

Recreational opportunities that support a variety of user groups of all ages and abilities are important for the community and tourism. Connectivity between these opportunities will provide additional recreation options for all. While the Sheltowee Trace Trail provides connections between assets within the City of Morehead and Rowan County, improvements to the trails and corridors that focus on biking and pedestrian use will be most beneficial. Opportunities for asset development include the Licking River, Triplett Creek, and Slab Camp Climbing Area. These natural resources provide additional water and land-based recreation options that expand the target audience that Rowan County and the City of Morehead want to attract. Connections and recreational opportunities that are family friendly will attract the broadest audience.

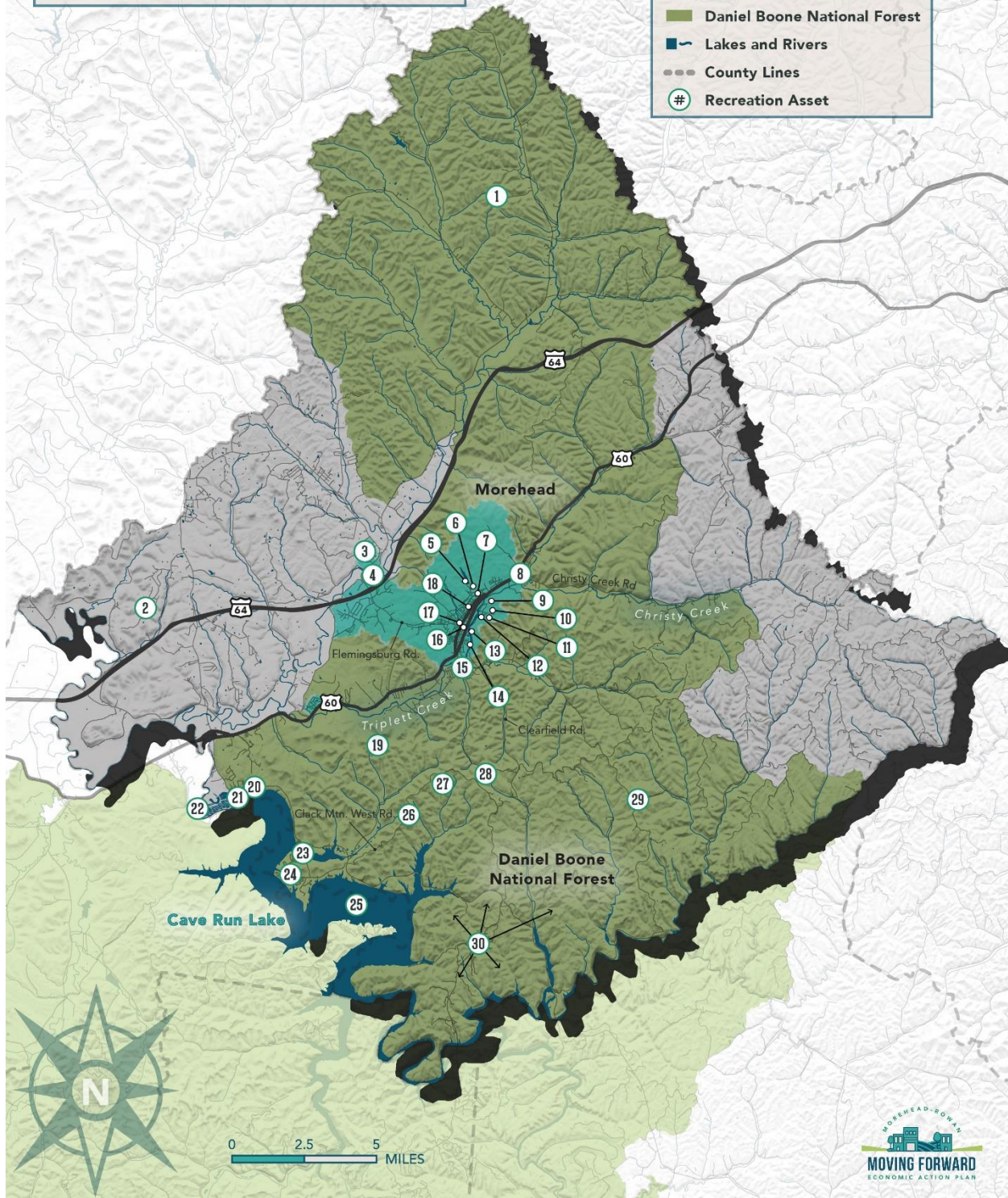


### EXISTING RECREATION ASSETS

ROWAN COUNTY, KY

### LEGEND

- Morehead City Limits
- Daniel Boone National Forest
- Lakes and Rivers
- County Lines
- Recreation Asset



0 2.5 5 MILES





## KEY

### Morehead - Rowan Recreation Assets

- ① Sheltopee Trace National Recreation Trail
- ② Eagle Trace Golf Course
- ③ Rowan County Senior High School Facilities
- ④ Zane Collins Community Park
- ⑤ Eagle Lake & Trailhead
- ⑥ Morehead State University Facilities
- ⑦ Laughlin Health Building
- ⑧ Rodburn Elementary School
- ⑨ Triplett Creek
- ⑩ Morehead City Park Complex
- ⑪ Rodburn Hollow Park and Loop Trail
- ⑫ Morehead Memorial Tree Park
- ⑬ Triplett Valley Park
- ⑭ Boone Hollan Wetlands & Nature Trail Area
- ⑮ Clearfield Elementary School Facilities
- ⑯ Kentucky Folk Art Center
- ⑰ Morehead Conference Center
- ⑱ Downtown Morehead
- ⑲ Limestone Knob
- ⑳ US Army Corp of Engineers Day Use Area
- ㉑ Minor E. Clark Fish Hatchery
- ㉒ Licking River
- ㉓ Scotts Creek Marina/Cave Run Marina
- ㉔ Twin Knobs Campground & Beach
- ㉕ Cave Run Lake
- ㉖ USFS Mountain Bike Trails/Clack Mountain Road West
- ㉗ Lockegee Rock
- ㉘ Dirt Nasty Off-Road Park
- ㉙ Slab Camp Climbing Area
- ㉚ Daniel Boone National Forest







## QUALITY OF LIFE ASSESSMENT

Livability includes a number of factors within the built and natural environments that can affect a community's quality of life. Walkability, public access, and overall design within both environments are important factors. Creating areas and connections that are safe, accessible, and comfortable promote livability and quality of life.

The City of Morehead is located between Interstate 64 and US 60. Access to Downtown Morehead is along KY 32 also known locally as Flemingsburg Road. This high volume and high-speed arterial road network follows traditional planning policies that focuses on vehicular connectivity with minimal consideration to access, safety, connectivity, or equity. Generous shoulders on these roads provide space for alternative transportation opportunities but high vehicular speeds decrease the perception of safe, accessible, and comfortable options. Challenging terrain and topography also limit road development within the City and throughout the County.

While the downtown area provides infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, the facilities are often minimal and don't meet current design standards. The lack of safe, comfortable, and adequate pedestrian facilities and connections within Downtown Morehead and the rest of the City restricts access by community members. In many cases, crosswalk distances are long with no refuge areas or traffic calming measures to reduce vehicular conflicts. The US 60 corridor provides very little pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure although City assets are located both west and east of the road.

The May 2019 City of Morehead + Rowan County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was developed to guide policies that will encourage and promote long-term pedestrian and bicycle improvements. It addresses project recommendations, phasing, and funding to provide adequate walking and biking opportunities in areas where such infrastructure is appropriate. Recommendations include linking neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and recreational facilities, improving existing facilities, and expanding the network regionally to promote tourism. Increasing walkability and access within the City of Morehead and Rowan County through these improvements will increase property values, attract business and tourism, and reduce pollution.

Downtown Morehead serves as a regional activity center for the area. KY 32 loosely defines the western boundary of the area while Morehead State University anchors the eastern end of Downtown. The streetscape and building facades vary along the length of Main Street. More recent commercial development characterizes the beginning of West Main Street as it transitions into a more typical downtown setting. A variety of retail, business, and institutional uses are found in Downtown Morehead. The vacancy rate of open storefronts appears to be low. There are some high-density residential areas along the roads that parallel Main Street to the east and west.

Typical commercial development spreads out of the downtown area and across US 60, locally known as Wilkinson Boulevard. Residential development dominates the western end of Morehead along US 60 West Main Street, and north of downtown. Pedestrian infrastructure is sparse to non-existent in these



areas with system gaps making walkability and public access to the rest of the City challenging without a vehicle.

## FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

The focus group on Recreation and Livability highlighted participant's personal experiences, perceived target audiences for recreation, existing assets, underutilized resources, and barriers to development. When asked about personal experiences, the focus group participants expressed an appreciation for various natural and recreational assets, the National Forest, Sheltopee Trace Trail, Eagle Lake, and other local trails and rivers. Additional top assets that the group feels like bring people into the County include Cave Run Lake, Lockegee Rock, Rodburn Hollow Park, Morehead State University, Laughlin Health Building, Kentucky Folk Art Museum, Eagle Trace Golf Course, and the extensive trail system found in the area.

Participants feel that the target group tourism is trying to attract to the community is changing. In the past, the target group was much broader in age from 18 to 65 years old. Now, the primary target audience is a diverse group between the ages of 18 and 30. Specifically, participants feel middle to high income individuals would be the most impactful on the area. The Focus group also expressed concern about the seasonality of tourism in the area. Spreading out use of natural and recreational assets throughout the year would make tourism more financially sustainable for Rowan County and the City of Morehead.

A challenge the group feels needs to be addressed is keeping the student population from Morehead State University in the area after graduation. While employment opportunities in the area are diverse, the group feels there is an opportunity to grow more in the higher skill areas of employment to help accomplish this.

The focus group identified Downtown Morehead as an underutilized asset that has potential. Participants feel that Main Street is improving with new businesses like Sawstone Brewing and New Frontier Outfitters. Additional programmatic opportunities like festivals can help Downtown Morehead grow. Other underutilized resources in the community that could be tapped in to included Triplett Creek, Licking River, and the Minor E. Clark Fish Hatchery. Improvements to trailheads and other trail facilities and amenities would also be beneficial.

The group sees Montgomery County and Mt. Sterling as competitors with strong assets that are similar to those in Rowan County and Morehead. Investors, local restaurants and businesses, downtown programming, and space for mixed-use development create an atmosphere that participants would like to see in Morehead. Achievable actions that focus group members would like to see for Rowan County and Morehead in the near-term future include downtown festivals, events marketing the beautiful assets of the community, and joint tourism marketing of the City and County.



## EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Morehead and Rowan County have a number of educational assets that provide a strong foundation for the development of workforce in the county. With Morehead State University and the Rowan Campus of Maysville Technical and Community College, there are a number of resources for residents to gain a quality education within the county.

Increased partnerships, better marketing of programs, and an emphasis on investment in K-12 education and work-based learning programs can help grow the workforce in the county. As new employers are attracted to Morehead-Rowan, the county must rely on these educational institutions as key partners in growing industry and filling jobs.

### SWOT

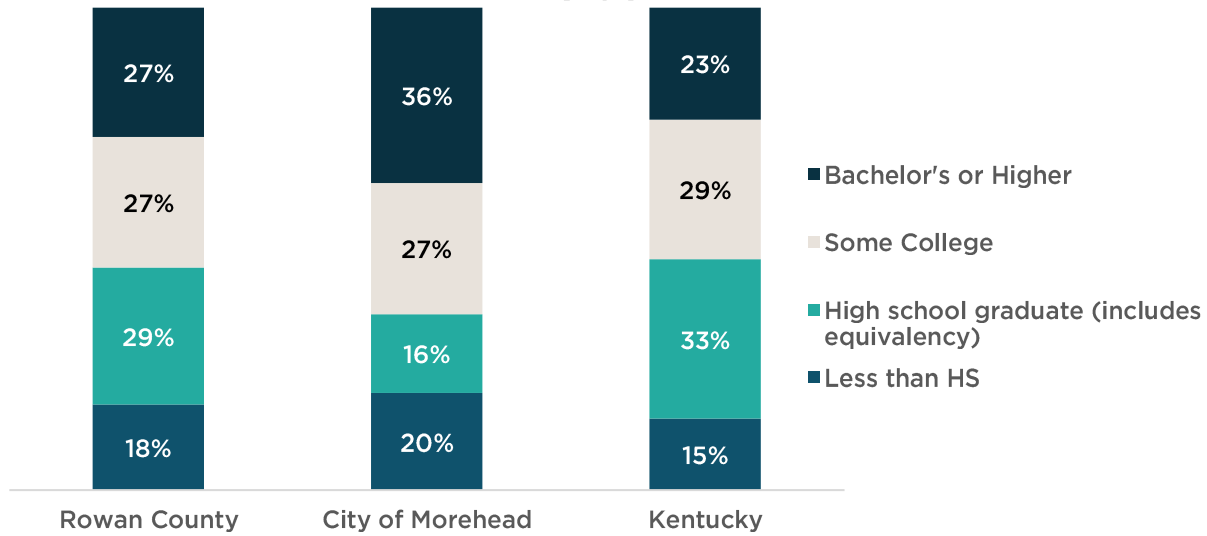
S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Diverse skillset of individuals in education</li> <li>•New businesses</li> <li>•Work Ethic Seal</li> <li>•Morehead State University</li> <li>•Individuals in the education system</li> <li>•CTE Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Disengaged students</li> <li>•Quality of teachers</li> <li>•Retention of students from Morehead State University</li> <li>•Lack of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Community partnerships</li> <li>•Aviation at the airport</li> <li>•Draw talent from neighboring counties</li> <li>•Charter schools</li> <li>•Experiential Learning</li> <li>•Dual Credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•State Funding</li> <li>•Recruitment of new Talent</li> <li>•Outflow of current workers</li> <li>•Opioid Epidemic</li> <li>•Brain Drain</li> <li>•Lack of staff training</li> </ul>

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Rowan County, the City of Morehead, and the state of Kentucky have a similar makeup of educational attainment. One notable difference is the higher number of individuals in the City of Morehead with a bachelor's degree or higher. This is likely due to the presence of the University and the presence of highly educated residents that remain in the area following graduation. According to the Morehead University 2018 Alumni Facts, about 3,285 records of alumni are living in the Rowan County area.



## Educational Attainment of the Population 25 and Older



Source: US Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1501

## WORKFORCE SKILLS

There were 4,292 unique job postings in Rowan County from July 2018 to July 2019. The most common occupations sought for in job postings over that time period were Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (220), First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (45), and Retail Salespersons (26). The table to the right provides insight into the supply and demand of relevant skills by comparing the frequency of skills present in job postings against skills present in today's workforce.<sup>9</sup> The Top hard skills related to job postings include: Merchandising, Truckload Shipping, Selling Techniques, Cash Register, and Restaurant Operation.

Top Common Skills	Frequency in Postings
Management	16%
Sales	14%
Customer Service	13%
Communications	10%
Operations	8%
Valid Driver's License	7%
Interpersonal Skills	6%
Leadership	5%
Innovation	5%
Good Driving Record	4%

## RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY

The table below highlights education-related resources in Rowan County as well as resources in nearby Montgomery and Carter counties. The most well-known educational institution in Rowan County is Morehead State University located in the City of Morehead. Morehead State has a long-standing reputation for offering a world-class education at an affordable price. Morehead State

<sup>9</sup> Economic Modeling Specialists, Emsi, 2019.3



University was included in Great Business School’s list of the Top 10 Most Affordable Business Bachelor’s Degrees for 2020, ranked at number seven on the list, which includes schools of all sizes from across the country.

Additionally, the County has technical and community-based colleges to offer students a wider variety of educational opportunities.

NAME	TYPE	ADDRESS	PHONE	Location
J's Academy of Cosmetology	Beauty School	215 Evans Ave. Mt Sterling, KY 40353	859-404-3493	Montgomery
Maysville Community & Technical College: Rowan Campus	Community College	400 Rocky Adkins Tech Dr, Morehead KY 40351	859-234-8626	Rowan
Morehead State University	Public University	150 University Blvd, Morehead KY 40351	606-783-2381	Rowan
Morehead State University Science Center	Public University	Martindale Dr, Morehead KY 40351	606-783-2381	Rowan
Carter County Vocational School	Vocational School	15 Grahn Rd Olive Hill KY 41164	606-286-4022	Carter

### Rowan County Schools Career Pathways

The Rowan County Schools, the county’s K-12 system, has a strong career pathway program. According to the county website, any student completing three or more vocational credits during their high school career will be able to take the KOSSA test (Kentucky Occupation Skill Standards Assessment). Students who pass the KOSSA test and have four credit hours in that pathway will receive three free college credit hours. Specific pathways include: Animal Science; Agriculture Construction; Plant and Horticulture Systems; and Environmental Science/Natural Resources. Additionally, students can take Industry Certificate Exams in the following areas:

- Business Management;
- Finance;
- Administrative Support;
- Engineering and Technology;
- Civil Architect and Construction;
- Consumer Family Management;
- Visual Art;
- And electives.

The Kentucky Department of Education expresses the need for Career Pathways as systemic frameworks for transforming educational institutions by proactively addressing the needs of students and employers across the learning continuum. Career Pathways are developed, implemented and maintained in partnership among secondary and postsecondary institutions, business and employers. A program of studies for each career pathways is a coherent,



unduplicated sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical courses including dual credit opportunities, leading to postsecondary degrees and industry recognized certifications and/or licensures. Kentucky has emphasized the transition from secondary to post-secondary studies in the past few years.

### **Kentucky Career Center-TENCO Workforce Development Programming**

The Kentucky Career Center (KCC) – TENCO is a one-stop shop for individuals and businesses needing assistance with workforce solutions. The city of Morehead is one of the three Career Center locations related to TENCO within the state of Kentucky. The Workforce Development Board operates under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and provides oversight for all services provided through the KCC-TENCO. According to the KCC Regional Plan, Rowan County is among the Region’s highest graduation rate, averaging a 98.8%.

The KCC has recognized six counties in the East Region of Kentucky as Work Ready: Montgomery, Rowan, Fleming, Mason, Greenup, and Boyd. Work Ready communities are a measure of a county’s workforce quality to assure business and industry in the community is committed to providing the highly skilled workforce required in today’s competitive global economy.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, Rowan County Community Schools participate in the Community Work Transition Program—an outcome based program allowing job coaches for eligible students who are not able to attend a post-secondary training program or military.

Annually, the KCC Board and staff analyzes labor market information from past WIOA participants, Office of Employment and Training reports, and other sources to determine if the occupational sectors selected are still viable for the TENCO area. Representation from business, education, and public agencies are included in the sector review and recommendations made to the TENCO Workforce Investment Board. The Workforce Development Board has identified the occupations shown below as the high demand jobs in the Rowan County-area.

Healthcare	Manufacturing and Distribution	Skilled Trades	Transportation	Business/Support Programs
Nurse Assistant	Engineering	Carpentry/Construction	CDL-Heavy Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers	Accounting
EMT/Paramedic	Machine Tool	Electrical Techs/Electricians	Diesel Engine Mechanics	Management
Registered Nurse	Industrial Maintenance	Pipe Layers		Computer Systems Analytics
Certified Medical Assisting	Chemical Plant Operator	Industrial HVAC-Refrigeration		Administrative Assistant

<sup>10</sup> Think Kentucky, WorkReady, 2018. <http://thinkkentucky.com/workready/>.



Program	2017 Completions
General Studies	193
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	105
Social Work	90
Business/Commerce, General	83
Biomedical Sciences, General	60
Accounting	58
Medical Technology/Science - Radiologic Therapist	57
Engineering Technology, General	54
Special Education and Teaching, General	48
Elementary Education and Teaching	46

LPN	Advanced Manufacturing Technician	Plumbing		Paralegal/Legal Assistant
Physical Therapy Assistant	Plant/Manufacturing Operator	Survey Mapping		

### Rowan County Program Completions

In 2017, there were 1,787 program completions by students in Rowan County.<sup>11</sup> This includes certificates as well as Associate’s, Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctorates. The table below shows the most common programs completed, including General Studies (193), Registered Nursing (105), and Social Work (90). General Studies programs build a broad-based education to take a multidisciplinary approach to education. The program combines arts, biological and physical sciences, social sciences, and the humanities. This program provides an opportunity to explore interests while preparing for a variety of career options.

### FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

The focus group on education in Morehead-Rowan focused on the big impacts, challenges, goals, and current gaps present in the education system. Overall, focus group participants feel education in the county is positive.

As one of the few counties in Kentucky with both a two and four-year college, Rowan County has a number of key assets related to education. In addition to Morehead State University, the Rowan campus of Maysville Community & Technical College provides a combination of key resources for businesses and residents in the community. Participants in the focus group stressed the importance of the partnership between these organizations as well as Rowan County Schools, the K-12 system as key component of the county’s success.

<sup>11</sup> Emsi, Q3



Dual credit programs are a strong draw for students to get college credit while still enrolled in high school level courses.

Other assets and programs in the county include an entrepreneurship space downtown called the LaunchPad, the Rowan County School's Work Ethic Seal program, and MSU's Space Science Program.

Recent successes in the county include the attraction of AppHarvest, a new greenhouse currently under construction. The advancement of job opportunities, business growth, and development can be a gateway for graduating students in high school or at the university level to advance their career in Morehead Rowan. The success of AppHarvest is clear, but the opportunity brings a few of the community's gaps to the forefront as well, such as filling the positions created at AppHarvest.

Gaps listed by participants include a limited number of teachers, funding, apprenticeship programs, and the recruitment of new talent into existing programs. Without the proper funding and incentive packages, the participants feel recruitment of fresh and new talent is limited.

Talent retention is a challenge in the region, with many educated graduates leaving the county. Additional challenges to growing a strong educational system to meet twenty first century needs is the continuing brain drain in the county. Along with proper funding for recruitment of new talent, proper placemaking qualities are not present in the area, making it easier to leave once completing education, according to the focus group participants.

Opportunities for growth in education in the county include a focus on experiential learning, dual credit, project-based learning, and more hands-on apprenticeships. To achieve the vision, participants believe partnerships with businesses, the higher education opportunities, and between schools will be necessary. Additionally, providing students with increased technology programming will prepare students with experience to move into any opportunity following their current program.

With Morehead State being a strong anchor institution in the area, the focus group participants clearly see a connection to drawing upon the strengths of the University for impact. State funding, brain drain, disengaged students, and the opioid epidemic were discussed by participants as challenges to achieve this vision and were mentioned as gaps above.





## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Rowan County’s natural environment is one of its strongest assets. It is home to a variety of natural amenities, has some of the cleanest air of any county in the state, and has done a good job preparing for natural disasters. Nevertheless, there are still threats to its long-term sustainability, including that of flooding, waste management, energy production, and challenges with funding long-term environmental planning initiatives. In order to maintain its quality of life as an environmentally sustainable community, Morehead-Rowan County must continue to improve partnerships between environmental organizations, increase public awareness and citizen engagement in sustainability practices, and continue to improve its management of floodplains associated with Triplett Creek.

### SWOT

S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Natural Resources: Boone National Forest and Cave Run Lake</li> <li>•Community initiatives: recycling center, littering program, Trail Town Initiative, Firewise Program</li> <li>•Community events: Memorial Tree Walk, Wetland Restoration Project, Rodburn Park Cleanup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Environmental Compliance</li> <li>•Public awareness/citizen engagement</li> <li>•Pollution/Waste in Streams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Solar Power</li> <li>•Recycling increase</li> <li>•Communication and partnerships</li> <li>•Citizen engagement</li> <li>•MS4 Program</li> <li>•Flooding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Flooding</li> <li>•Lack of zoning in County</li> <li>•Erosion Threats</li> <li>•Forest Fires</li> <li>•Amount of litter coming from highway</li> <li>•Funding and long-term planning</li> </ul>

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management is one of the most significant environmental issues in Morehead and Rowan County. Local leaders expressed that litter control is one of the biggest challenges faced by those who are charged with environmental management in the county. For example, a combination of local inmates and volunteers collected approximately 5,000 bags of litter from I-64 in 2018. In addition, leaders expressed that it is very difficult to prevent residents from disposing of waste into local streams, such as Triplett Creek. Consequently, these streams are frequently beset by issues with litter, and in some cases pollution.



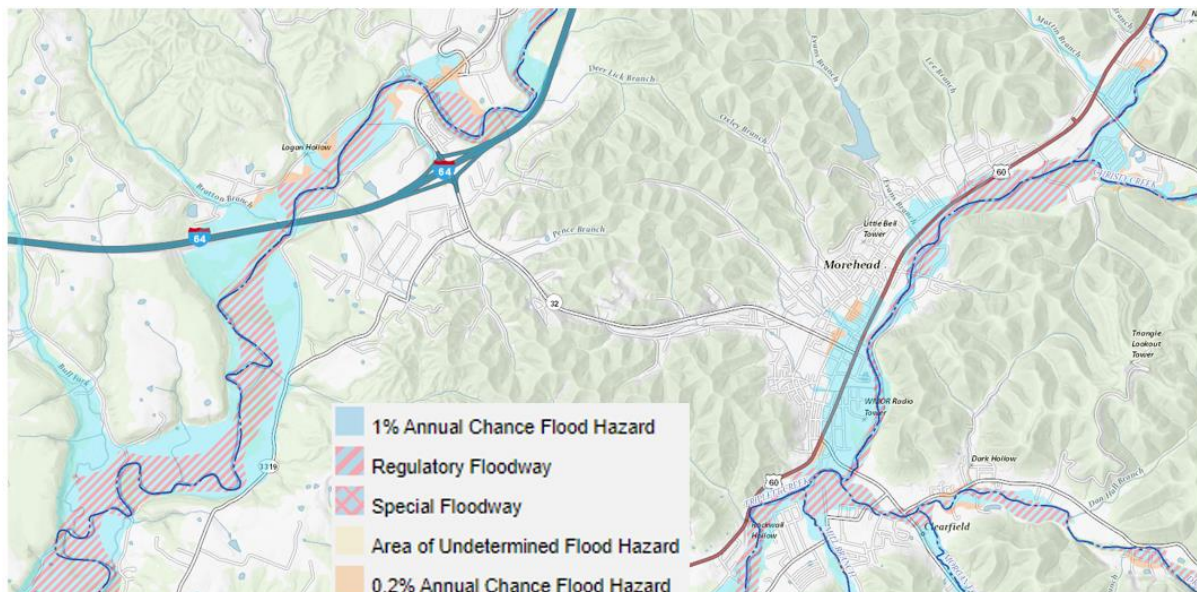
On the whole, however, the quality of Rowan County’s air and water is good. Rowan County ranks second among all Kentucky counties for the health of its physical environment.<sup>12</sup> This is due to the lack of drinking water violations in the County as well as a higher than average rate of walking to work and a lower than average level of air pollution. Rowan County has 9% less air pollution than the Kentucky average, ranking 20<sup>th</sup> out of 120 counties.

In addition, focus group participants expressed that several Rowan County waste management institutions are assets to the community. One of these, the Morehead Recycling Center, is currently supported through a partnership with Morehead State University and the City of Morehead. Another, the county landfill, is in the process of using its methane resources to generate power and planning to start selling energy soon.

## NATURAL DISASTERS

Rowan County is subject to a variety of natural threats, including floods, mudslides, tornadoes, winter storms, and drought. Of these threats, flooding is the most common issue faced by Rowan County residents. As the map below shows, significant portions of the City of Morehead, Farmers, and Clearfield are in regulator floodways or 1% annual chance flood areas. In July of 2019, Morehead faced significant flash flooding due to torrential rain, while in May of 2010, the area was subject to flooding that caused significant damage to properties within the Triplett Creek floodplain. Following this flood, Rowan County was awarded a grant from FEMA to clear 20 floodplain properties that were damaged in the flood.<sup>13</sup>

*Central Rowan County Flood Map*



<sup>12</sup> County Health Rankings. (2019). Health Factors: Physical Environment. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/kentucky/2019/rankings/factors/5>

<sup>13</sup> The Morehead News. (2013). Fifth Flood Buyout Structure Demolished. [https://www.themoreheadnews.com/news/local\\_news/fifth-flood-buyout-structure-demolished/article\\_cc734786-2edb-5d0c-a4ee-9f75eecb6b87.html](https://www.themoreheadnews.com/news/local_news/fifth-flood-buyout-structure-demolished/article_cc734786-2edb-5d0c-a4ee-9f75eecb6b87.html)



According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Kentucky has 77 Disaster Declarations in the system dating back to 1957, the most prominent of which was mudslides. Regions like Kentucky with mountains more commonly see landslide issues. Landslides are caused by disturbances in the natural stability of a slope. They can accompany heavy rains or follow droughts, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions. Mudslides develop when water rapidly accumulates in the ground and results in a surge of water-saturated rock, earth, and debris. There have been approximately 2,300 mudslides in Kentucky's recorded history; while Rowan County is not the most common location for these slides to occur, approximately 10 have occurred within the county. In Kentucky, costs of landslides and rockfall repair exceed \$4 million annually.<sup>14</sup>

Though natural disasters do pose a concern for Rowan County, local leaders expressed that the county is more prepared than most for the onset of these challenges. The Gateway Area Development District has an active hazard mitigation plan, and leaders expressed that there is good collaboration between the community's public works, police, and emergency services departments. Watershed management was cited as the area with the most significant room for improvement—including challenges associated with residents placing new structures in flood plains, ongoing erosion, and stormwater management within the city of Morehead.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

The Daniel Boone National Forest embraces some of the most rugged terrain west of the Appalachian Mountains. Steep forested slopes, sandstone cliffs and narrow ravines characterize the land. Visitors come to hike, camp, picnic, boat, and more. Spread across 21 counties of southern and eastern Kentucky, the forest accounts for more than 708,000 acres of land. The forest contains three large lakes, with Cave Run Lake at the edge of Rowan County. The 8,270-acre Cave Run Lake is most widely known for its outdoor recreation opportunities,

*Cave Run Lake*



excellent fishing and scenic beauty. However, the lake project was constructed primarily for the purpose of reducing flood damage. The Corps of Engineers operates and maintains the dam and three day-use recreation areas near the dam. The remaining recreation areas are under the jurisdiction of the Cumberland District of the U.S. Forest Service.

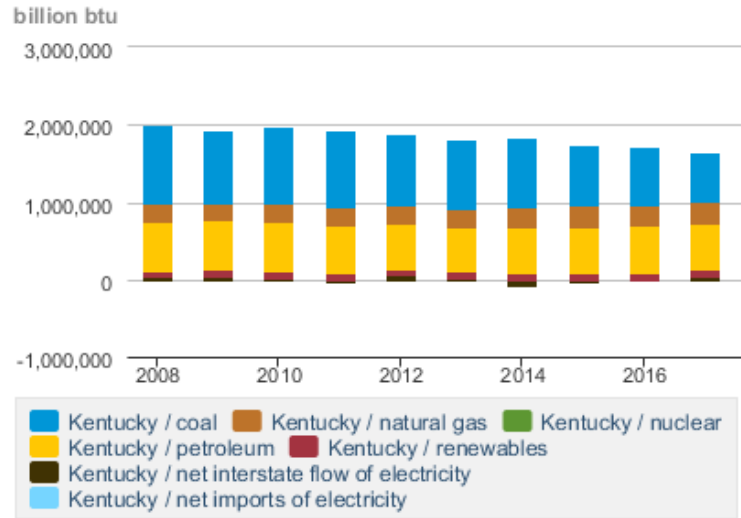
<sup>14</sup> University of Kentucky Geological Survey. Landslide Fact Sheet (2019). Accessed from [https://www.uky.edu/KGS/education/factsheet/landslide\\_factsheet.pdf](https://www.uky.edu/KGS/education/factsheet/landslide_factsheet.pdf).



## ENERGY

Kentucky has an energy-intensive economy and is among the top states in consuming the most energy to produce a dollar of gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>15</sup> Kentucky's location and low energy prices have helped attract manufacturing to the state. The industrial activities that make the largest contribution to Kentucky's GDP include the manufacture of motor vehicles; food and beverages; agriculture and forestry; tobacco products; and chemicals. Kentucky also has a large coal mining sector and petroleum refineries, both energy-intensive industries.<sup>16</sup> Specifically,

**Total energy consumption estimates by source, annual**



eia State Energy Data System (SEDS)

Kentucky is the fifth-largest coal producer in the nation and about one-fifth of all operating U.S. coal mines are in Kentucky, more than any other state except Pennsylvania. Rowan County does not have a coal mine within County boundaries. However, focus group participants estimate that the county receives approximately 65% of its electricity through coal, with the remainder coming from natural gas. This distribution may need to change in future years; the U.S. Energy Information Administration projects that natural gas and renewables will be the two most common electricity generation fuels by 2025, with coal production stagnating or declining through 2050.<sup>17</sup>

## SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITIES

### Countywide Zoning

One of the potential threats to the county is the current lack of zoning throughout the county. As expressed by focus group participants, this poses a challenge to both economic development and environmental sustainability—with challenges associated with constructing buildings in floodplains or creation of new enterprises with environmental runoffs adjacent to large economic development investments. Countywide zoning could be one opportunity to protect Rowan County's natural assets as well as its economic investments.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. EIA, State Energy Data System, Total EIA consumption, real GDP, and energy intensity, 1960-2016, XLSX file.

<sup>16</sup> Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet, Office of Energy Policy, Final Report on Kentucky's Participation in NGA Policy Academy on Power Sector Modernization (2018), Key Demographic and Economic Considerations.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. EIA. (2019). Annual Energy Outlook 2019, with Projections to 2050. <https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/pdf/aeo2019.pdf>



## Public Awareness

As suggested by focus group participants, there are significant opportunities within Rowan County to get residents involved in environmental initiatives, participate in recycling and river cleanups, and take responsibility for the maintenance of the natural environment in Rowan County. This type of efforts could pay dividends in terms of decreased litter, increased appetite for long-term investments in stormwater management and green infrastructure, and opportunities for new sustainability programs.

## Green Infrastructure & Stormwater Management

Green infrastructure is an integral component of sustainable communities primarily because it can help communities protect the environment and human health while providing other social and economic benefits. Additionally, green infrastructure and sustainable communities' approaches can help local governments that are struggling to pay for needed upgrades to stormwater and wastewater infrastructure that is beyond its intended lifespan. With the significance of stormwater management as a long-term threat to Rowan County, green infrastructure may be an opportunity to increase environmental preparedness. However, adapting infrastructure so that it is more resilient to these types of changes can be expensive.<sup>18</sup>

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Information gathered around Morehead-Rowan's environmental sustainability was completed in various formats to accommodate stakeholder schedules. Data was collected via an interview and an online survey. Individuals were asked about the assets, threats, challenges, priorities, and preparation for natural disasters in relation to environmental sustainability.

Participants listed Triplett Creek and the Community Recycling Center as Morehead Rowan's biggest assets. Additionally, participants feel the Firewise Program, Trail Town Initiative, Memorial Tree Walk, and Wetland Restoration Project as assets in the community. Specifically, contributors felt the access to these programs, natural resources, and community-based clean up events are effective in the sustainability of Morehead-Rowan. With a clear picture of how Morehead Rowan is strong in the variety of natural assets and programming around continuing the upkeep of the area, various threats are present to the continuation of these assets.

Specifically, participants felt threats to sustainability include lack of funding, public education, and regulated waste disposal. Specifically, the typography of hollows and creeks make it hard to regulate waste disposal in Morehead-Rowan. To combat the lack of public education, the participants suggest long-term projects with Morehead State University, or local schools, promoting awareness. Additionally, flooding due to the typography of the area is a consistent issue according to participants. Other natural threats listed in respondent's answers are forest fires and erosion.

When asked about challenges related to the environment, participants discussed issues revolving around public awareness. Specifically, large amounts

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<sup>18</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2014. Accessed From: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-08/documents/green-infrastructure.pdf>.



of trash along the highway and environmental compliance were listed as two challenges to environmental sustainability in Morehead Rowan. In addition, one participant listed a lack of collaboration between varying entities in the county as a challenge to success.

When asked about future priorities for environmental sustainability, participants stressed the need to build on the assets of Morehead-Rowan to prioritize sustainability in the future, including recycling, solar power, citizen empowerment, and floodplain management. Participants in the survey and interview also felt the community is prepared and has thought out preparation procedures for natural disasters. The group did not have much more to say on the topic of preparation for natural disasters.

In conclusion, participants discussed other ways to encourage the expansion of environmental sustainability, considering partnerships with MSU, school campaigns, and incentives for positive behavior as options to expand efforts.



## ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

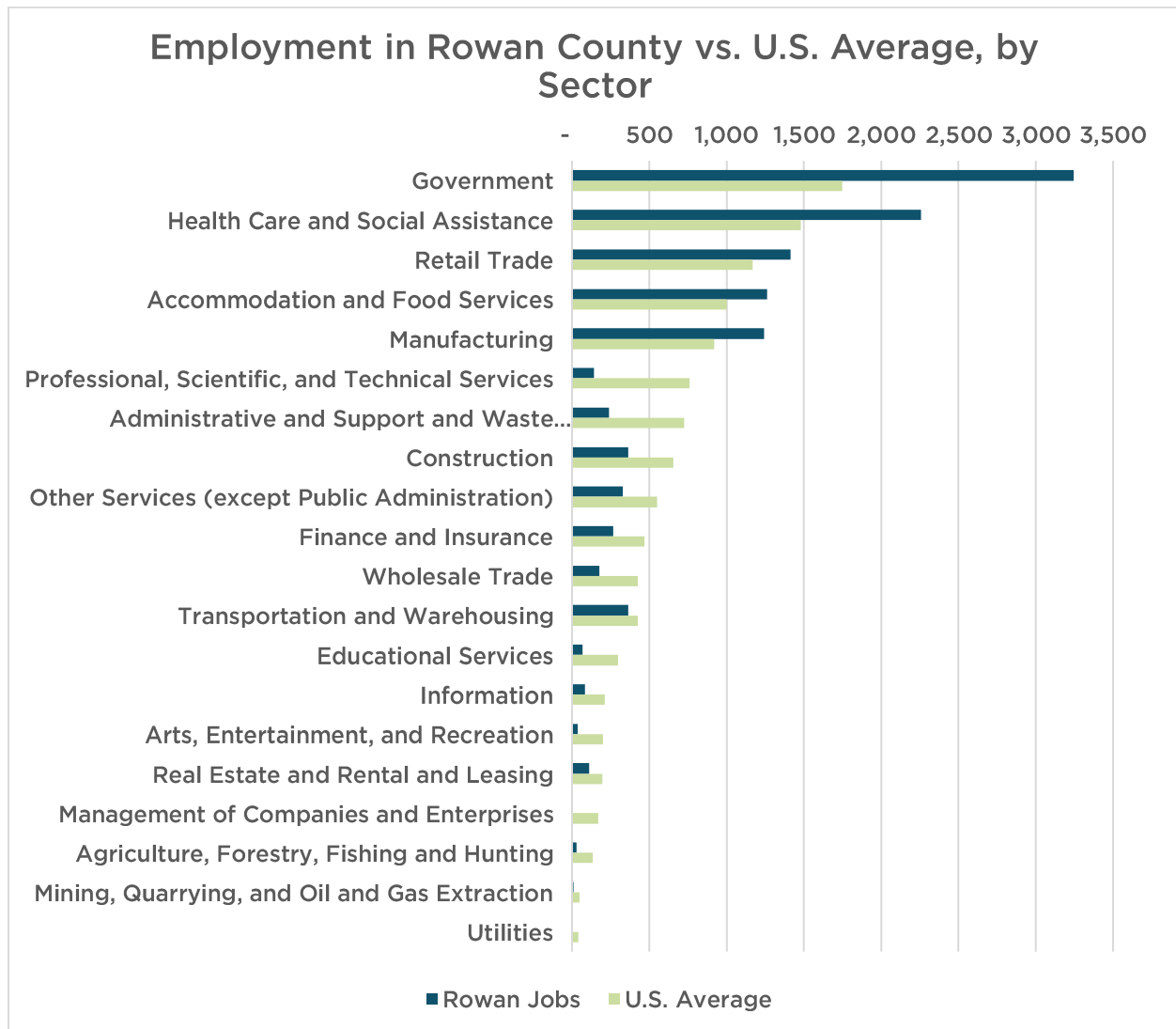
Rowan County's economy has significant assets to build upon, including Morehead State University, natural tourism assets, and St. Claire Health Care. These strengths help make Morehead and Rowan County the hub of the region, attracting spending, visitors, and commuters from throughout Eastern Kentucky. However, the community is constrained by workforce availability, flat land, and competition from neighboring regions. The City of Morehead is in need of increased downtown development, while the remainder of the county could benefit from new industrial and tourism developments to fuel economic growth. Several target industries, such as food processing; medical devices; and scientific research & development, pose strong opportunities for future business growth and attraction. Rowan County has strong industrial park and development site assets available to meet some of these needs.

### SWOT

S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Cake Run Lake</li> <li>•Available land at the Industrial Park</li> <li>•Airport proximity</li> <li>•Education</li> <li>•University Farm</li> <li>•Rajant, Morehead State University, and R&amp;D Talent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Infrastructure (housing)</li> <li>•Livability</li> <li>•Innovation</li> <li>•Available flat land throughout county</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Distillery development</li> <li>•Space Science Center</li> <li>•Downtown identity: hotel, retail</li> <li>•Natural Resources: Timber</li> <li>•Small Business creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Workforce availability</li> <li>•Slow pace of development</li> <li>•Brain drain</li> <li>•Planning/zoning</li> </ul>



## ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS



Rowan County’s economy is dominated by two primary institutions: Morehead State University and St. Claire HealthCare. This is reflected in the chart below, which compares the county’s employment in industry sectors with the U.S. average for a county of the same size. Unsurprisingly, Rowan County’s two largest sectors are Health Care and Social Assistance; and Government employment (which includes the public university). A few other sectors are also strong compared to the U.S. average: Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Accommodation & Food Services. Where Rowan County particularly lags the U.S. is in professional services, arts, entertainment, and administrative services.

At a detailed industry level, there are 14 industries that make Rowan County’s economy unique. Each of these industries provides at least 0.5% of Rowan County’s jobs and has a location quotient greater than 1.25—meaning that Rowan County’s employment in the industry is substantially higher than the national average. These industries are shown in the table below, and include limited-service restaurants, motor vehicle parts manufacturing, and supercenters, as well as hospitals and universities.





### Base Industries in Rowan County

NAICS	Industry Name	2018 Jobs	5-Year Growth	5-Year Forecast	Location Quotient	Avg. Earnings
902612	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (State Government)	1,797	-14.8%	-4.1%	9.5	\$44,535
622110	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	1,132	19.6%	13.8%	3.4	\$69,799
722513	Limited-Service Restaurants	592	14.8%	5.0%	1.9	\$14,895
336370	Motor Vehicle Metal Stamping	503	16.0%	-2.6%	77.7	\$56,110
452311	Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters	398	14.1%	3.1%	3.8	\$31,676
902999	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	316	-1.4%	-4.4%	2.0	\$55,913
493110	General Warehousing and Storage	286	-8.3%	-8.9%	3.9	\$42,366
321920	Wood Container and Pallet Manufacturing	269	395.0%	28.8%	57.7	\$47,552
444110	Home Centers	154	11.8%	4.8%	3.0	\$30,197
332991	Ball and Roller Bearing Manufacturing	150	-23.1%	-25.9%	80.2	\$42,737
623110	Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	147	29.7%	7.1%	1.3	\$38,001
321113	Sawmills	131	21.8%	14.8%	21.1	\$47,187
447110	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	130	-8.1%	-5.7%	2.2	\$15,418
623210	Residential Intellectual and Developmental Disability Facilities	124	129.5%	21.3%	4.2	\$27,098

## TARGETED INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

Based on the existing strengths in the Rowan County regional economy, industry targets can be identified that would make strong candidates for business growth or attraction. Target industries identified through this process include Automotive, Electric Power Generation & Transmission, Food Processing & Manufacturing, Scientific Research & Development, Medical Devices, Wood Products, and Warehousing & Distribution.

### Target Industry Methods

Each of these industries were identified based upon a combination of quantitative and qualitative factors. Targets were primarily based upon industries that displayed some level of regional employment potential, existing local supply chain gaps, and high average wages. In addition, business sectors were identified which can draw on or be supported by other community resources such as education, training or workforce resources;



recreation/tourism assets; natural resources; highway and air transportation resources; community location advantages; land resources; and, agricultural resources.

### **Automotive**

The first target industry for Morehead – Rowan County is automotive. In particular, motor vehicle parts manufacturing poses a strong opportunity for the region, with the already existing presence of SRG Global in Morehead and Rowan County’s strategic location in a state with a plethora of automotive manufacturers. The seven-county region as a whole has nearly seven times the national average employment in motor vehicle parts manufacturing and imports over \$96.5B in goods from outside regions. These industries tend to pay higher than average wages and could benefit from strong complementary local workforce and business ecosystems.

### **Food Processing**

The Rowan County region already has a clear strength and industry presence in food processing with a regional location quotient of 8.6 for Animal Food Manufacturing and Animal Slaughtering. However, the region still imports 76.6% of its goods in these two industries. Additionally, industry presence in the region is primarily located in counties other than Rowan County—with no animal food production occurring in the county at all.

However, with the addition of AppHarvest, a 2.6 million square foot hydroponic greenhouse currently under construction, national attention in food innovation is being drawn to Rowan County. The EDC should take advantage of this free publicity by promoting opportunities for related food and agriculture industry businesses to locate nearby this facility. Even unrelated food production businesses can be marketed by offering a workforce that has experience in the food industry.

### **Bourbon Industry**

Starting in 2015, Rowan County has an existing stave mill operation that is owned by the largest bourbon barrel maker in the world. That cooperage is one of several owned by a company called Independent Stave, which is based in Missouri and is the largest maker of bourbon whiskey barrels in the world. Independent Stave is now constructing a state-of-the-art cooperage on HWY 801, just north of I-64 in Rowan County. The cooperage will have a visitor center and plans to be a stop on the Bourbon Trail. This would seem to be an invitation for a distillery operation to open in Rowan County to take advantage of nearby barrel production and create tourism opportunities in harmony with the cooperage.

The Bourbon industry joined elected officials and key business executives to unveil a new Bourbon impact study earlier in 2019 that shows the industry now provides twice as many jobs, payroll, capital investment and tax revenue than a decade ago. The study revealed:

- 32 Kentucky counties have at least one distillery, up from only 8 in 2009;
- Bourbon barrel inventory, now at 7.5 million, has reached its highest level since 1972. Bourbon production (new barrels filled) has increased 115 percent since 2009;



- Kentucky exported more than \$450 million in Bourbon and other spirits in 2017; the export value has tripled in the last 20 years.
- Kentucky Distillery Association distillers bought more than nine million bushels of corn and other grains from Kentucky farmers in 2017, more than half of all distillery corn purchases.

In 2018, there are now 39 companies operating 52 distilleries in the Commonwealth making 6.8 million barrels of aging Bourbon – all modern records. Distillers also paid a record \$19.2 million last year in barrel taxes that fund critical local programs such as education, public safety and health.

### Medical Devices

The medical device industry sector does not exist in the County but inquiries have been received by the local Economic Development Council from these types of manufacturers. It is currently a regional strength, with a regional location quotient of 5.1. Economic data indicates that there is current demand for approximately \$5.5m in production of medical devices within Rowan County itself.<sup>19</sup> Drone manufacturers, electrical/mechanical medical device makers, electrical/mechanical auto components manufacturers have all considered a Rowan County location in the past. This type of manufacturing can be supported by well-educated students coming out of the MSU Bachelor of Space Science program. In addition, students are being educated in math, science and hands-on manufacturing skills at the KCTCS Rowan Campus in the Regional Business Park. The EDC should prepare promotional products advertising the skilled workforce for this industry sector in Rowan County as well as using the Rajant story to promote this sector to site consultants and industry publications. An added benefit of this industry is that it pays higher than average, with average earnings per job of \$56.0k.<sup>20</sup>

### Scientific Research & Development (Aerospace)

While the region surrounding Rowan County is currently lacking in research and development focused jobs, there is an opportunity to leverage existing assets in the area to better attract these types of positions. With average earnings per job of \$104,300, the scientific research and development industry should be a key focus for the EDC moving forward. Economic models indicate that the county currently imports \$14.3m annually of research and development services, and the 7-county region imports \$41.6m annually in the same industries.<sup>21</sup> With the presence of Morehead State University, this sector is a large opportunity area for Rowan County.

In 2016, the Morehead Rowan County EDC (EDC) successfully recruited Rajant Industries to the community. Rajant is a high-tech business specializing in the development of wireless communication devices for the defense industry. Rajant quickly realized the value of the availability of students coming from Morehead State University's (MSU) Bachelor of Science in Space Science program as employees in the company's technology business. Rajant expects to grow with the introduction of other technology products which will rely on the skilled research and workforce coming from the MSU program.

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<sup>19</sup> Emsi, 2019.3

<sup>20</sup> Emsi, 2019.3

<sup>21</sup> Emsi, 2019.3



At the heart of MSU's Department of Earth and Space Sciences is the Ronald G. Eaglin Space Science Center (SSC). The facility houses state-of-the-art equipment and laboratories that provide valuable hands-on learning experience for students. The Space Science Center is home to MSU's Program of Distinction, the Bachelor of Science in Space Science.

MSU's Space Science Center was recently named the best aerospace research and development center in Kentucky by Southern Business and Development magazine, beating out research and development programs at Eastern Kentucky University, the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville.

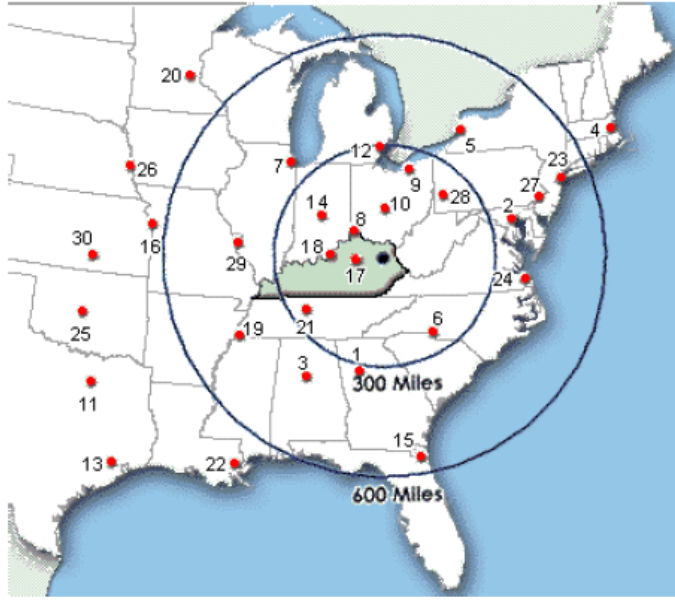
The EDC believes the aerospace industry can grow locally with recruitment of businesses similar to Rajant, who can utilize graduates who are highly trained in math and science and who have hands on experience in the aerospace sector.

### **Warehousing & Distribution**

Morehead's central location in the eastern U.S. and the route of I-64 bisecting Rowan County from east to west is clearly a valuable asset that should be marketed to the warehousing-distribution industry sector. In 2000, this location was recognized by Family Dollar Stores, Inc. when the company located its large (950,000) Midwest distribution center in the MMRC Regional Business Park. Now owned by Dollar Tree, this center utilizes the ready access to I-64 to service hundreds of retail outlets and employs about 240 at the distribution center. The facility is served by major trucking companies which makes the presence of major truck lines readily available for other distributors in the County.

The I-64 location for the regional industrial park also means the busy I-75 interstate is 60 miles via west I-64 from the park. Also, Morehead is 71 miles via east I-64 from the Prichard, WV transloading freight facility in West Virginia and 69 miles from the Port of Wurtland on the Ohio River. Finally, the regional Morehead-Rowan County Airport (5,500' runway) is 2.5 miles north of the regional business park; the park is 61 miles via I-64 east from the Huntington Tri-State Commercial Airport, 3 miles south of Huntington, WV; and, 65 miles via I-64 west from Lexington's Bluegrass Airport.

The following map and data were provided by the Kentucky ED Cabinet supporting Morehead-Rowan County's strategic location for shipping. The map demonstrates the beneficial location Rowan County has for this transportation dependent, warehousing industry sector.



Percent of U.S. Within 600 Miles of Morehead

Population 51%  
 Personal Income 51%  
 Retail Sales 50%  
 Manufacturing Employment 56%

Highway Distance to Selected Market Centers:

City	Miles	City	Miles	City	Miles
1. Atlanta, GA	421	11. Dallas, TX	935	21. Nashville, TN	278
2. Baltimore, MD	473	12. Detroit, MI	334	22. New Orleans, LA	807
3. Birmingham, AL	468	13. Houston, TX	1,057	23. New York, NY	647
4. Boston, MA	856	14. Indianapolis, IN	211	24. Norfolk, VA	511
5. Buffalo, NY	479	15. Jacksonville, FL	757	25. Oklahoma City, OK	893
6. Charlotte, NC	378	16. Kansas City, MO	641	26. Omaha, NE	831
7. Chicago, IL	391	17. Lexington, KY	64	27. Philadelphia, PA	570
8. Cincinnati, OH	102	18. Louisville, KY	137	28. Pittsburgh, PA	335
9. Cleveland, OH	292	19. Memphis, TN	481	29. St. Louis, MO	399
10. Columbus, OH	152	20. Minneapolis, MN	799	30. Wichita, KS	837

Population Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2008 population estimate  
 Personal Income Source: 2007 Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), US Dept of Commerce  
 Retail Sales Source: 2002 Economic Census, US Census Bureau  
 Manufacturing Employment Source: 2007 County Business Patterns, US Census Bureau  
 Highway Distance Source: ESRI Arcview StreetMap, 2007

## Wood Products

Rowan County's primary wood industry is strong and has been a productive industry for the County going back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the secondary or value-added wood industry is limited in the County. Large amounts of wood are shipped out of the County to international destinations including China. There is some production of wood trim and next year production of bourbon barrels will begin, but there is opportunity for furniture makers, cabinet makers, truss manufacturers and other wooden product manufacturers to take advantage of the abundant wood resources in the area.



## SITE AVAILABILITY

The Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development maintains databases identifying available industrial sites and industrial buildings in Kentucky by the county of location. This database is used to provide prospective business locations for consideration by businesses who contact the Cabinet for assistance in identifying locations in Kentucky which align with their site selection criteria. If the Cabinet does not have site or building information for a specific County, the likelihood of a business prospect visiting that County is extremely low.

A search of the Cabinet’s site and buildings database for Rowan and the seven contiguous counties (Bath, Carter, Elliott, Fleming, Lewis, Menifee, and Morgan) reveals that the availability of “shovel ready” industrial sites in the eight county region is very limited and the available buildings in the region are severely limited. The following tables summarize the listed sites and buildings currently listed in the database.

The table below identifies seven industrial parks or sites in three of the eight counties (Fleming, Lewis and Rowan). Only the MMRC Regional Business Park and the small Flemingsburg Road Industrial site in Rowan County, have close access to an interstate highway (I-64). Interstate proximity is frequently a primary consideration for new businesses, particularly ones involving warehousing and distribution.

COUNTY	SITE NO.	NAME	LOCATION	SIZE (ACRES)	NEAREST INTERSTATE
FLEMING	SITE 069-001	FLEMINGSBURG-FLEMING COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK	0.8 MILE NORTH OF FLEMINGSBURG CITY LIMITS	14.8	I-64, 32 MILES SOUTH VIA KY 11
FLEMING	SITE 069-002	FLEMINGSBURG-FLEMING COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK II	1 MILE SOUTH OF FLEMINGSBURG CITY LIMITS	191.0	I-64, 28 MILES SOUTH VIA KY 11
LEWIS	SITE 135-006	CARRS GREENFIELD SITE	3 MILES NORTHWEST OF VANCEBURG CITY LIMITS	4532.0	I-64, 35 MILES VIA AA HIGHWAY
LEWIS	SITE 135-001	VANCEBURG-LEWIS COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK	2.1 MILES EAST OF VANCEBURG CITY LIMITS	118.5	I-64, 28.7 MILES VIA AA HIGHWAY
LEWIS	SITE 135-003	TOLLESBORO SITE	0.9 MILES WEST OF TOLLESBORO	28.5	I-64, 38 MILES VIA AA HIGHWAY
ROWAN	SITE 205-001	JOHN WILL STACY MMRC REGIONAL	5 MILES WEST OF MOREHEAD CITY LIMITS	281.7	I-64, 1.2 MILES VIA KY 801



		BUSINBESS PARK				
ROWAN	SITE2 05-011	MOREHEAD-2041 FLEMINGSBURG ROAD	WITHIN NORTHERN LIMITS MOREHEAD	CITY OF	16.0	I-64, 0.5 MILES VIA KY 32

The original Flemingsburg-Fleming County Industrial Park only has three small sites remaining in the park. The larger Flemingsburg-Fleming County Park II is developed but not occupied. One obstacle for this park is lack of interstate highway access.

The Carrs Site in Lewis County is not publicly owned but is being marketed by the ED Cabinet as an Ohio River site with large acreage that is of interest to large, heavy industry. These industries such as steel mills, chemical companies and aluminum rolling mills have large cooling water, electricity, barge loading/shipping, rail and land requirements that are typically not available at smaller sites or business parks which often have interstate access. Carrs is the only site meeting these criteria in the eight-county region. Lewis County is served by the "AA" Highway (Alexandria to Ashland), while not an interstate highway, it is a heavy duty, high quality highway suitable for industrial shipping. The AA highway provides good access to I-75 near Cincinnati and also to I-64. Consequently, the Vanceburg-Lewis County Industrial Park has experienced some success with its rail served, Ohio River location. The park has some available sites up to 38 acres in size and has ready access to the AA highway. The Tollesboro Site, while smaller, is located directly on the AA Highway and offers a 23-acre site.

In 1998, the Ky Economic Development Cabinet funded a regional business park in Rowan County using coal severance funds. Originally created by interlocal agreement between Menifee, Morgan, Rowan and Carter Counties the MMRC Regional Industrial Authority owns and operates the Park located at Exit 133 on I-64, 1.2 miles north of the exit on HWY 801. Carter County subsequently left the group and joined the Authority that operates Eastpark near Ashland. Thus, the MMRC Park is now controlled by Menifee, Morgan and Rowan Counties. This regional business park, due in part to its proximity to Interstate 64, Morehead State University, and a regional medical and business community (City of Morehead) has experienced success. In addition, this park serves as the location for the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS)-Maysville Community and Technical College (MCTC) Rowan Campus.

This campus offers higher education and job training opportunities on-site in the business park. This is the largest publicly controlled industrial park in the eight-county region and has been frequently recommended by the ED cabinet to industrial prospects.

Rowan County has recently experienced business location success in the MMRC Park neighborhood on nearby properties. The Morehead-Rowan County Industrial development authority recently sold a property on Airport Road (on HWY 801 a little north of the MMRC Park) that had been planned as an aviation business park. The entire property is now being developed as a cooperage site for production of white oak bourbon barrels by the Independent Stave



Corporation. Also on HWY 801, immediately north and adjacent to the MMRC Park, the AppHarvest group is constructing a 60 acre hydroponic greenhouse facility. The Morehead-Rowan County Economic Development Council was instrumental in recruiting this largest greenhouse operation in the U.S. to Rowan County. This operation will supply vegetables to much of the eastern U.S. and employ nearly 300 people while using technology imported from the Netherlands.

Rowan County has a privately owned 16-acre site listed in the database on Highway 32 just north of I-64 in the northern city limits of Morehead. The majority of this property is located in a floodplain, but it also lies in a Federally designated Opportunity Zone. It is suitable for a single purpose project, perhaps commercial, as it is located in a primarily commercial area. However, the adjacent property to the north is a sawmill operation which would be compatible with industrial use.

### Buildings

The table below only identifies two available industrial buildings in the region. The MMRC Regional Industrial Authority has constructed a 48,320 sq. ft. speculative manufacturing building at the entrance to the MMRC Regional Business Park. This is a quality facility, never occupied and in new condition. It has also experienced many business location referrals from the KY ED cabinet for Rowan County prospects.

The second facility is unique and technically not a building. In Carter County, a limestone mining operation has created a very large (2,600,000 sq. ft.) subterranean space that is naturally climate controlled and could be occupied by a business with special needs. Climate controlled storage and mushroom farming are two possibilities. Obviously, this type of space is not being considered by typical manufacturers.

Clearly there is a paucity of available buildings in the region. Considering the KY Economic Cabinet reports that about 70% of their requests for business locations are for existing buildings, it is evident why this region may not receive the number of site visits as some others in the state.

COUNTY	SITE NO.	NAME	LOCATION	SIZE (ACRES)	NEAREST INTERSTATE
CARTER	043-008	MEGA MEGA SUBTERRANEAN DEVELOPMENT	4.2 MILES SOUTHWEST OF HILL OLIVE CITY LIMITS	2,600,000	I-64, 8.2 MILES NORTH VIA KY 2
ROWAN	205-007	MMRC SPECULATIVE BUILDING	5 MILES WEST OF MOREHEAD CITY LIMITS	48,320	I-64, 1.2 MILES VIA KY 801





## Rowan County Opportunity Zone



Opportunity Zones offer a new economic development tool that promotes investment in distressed census tracts through legislation enacted by the Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. More than 8,700 census tracts across the United States have been designated as Opportunity Zones by the U.S. Department of Treasury, incentivizing investments in business growth, housing improvements, and

infrastructure updates in these distressed census tracts.

U.S. investors will potentially generate an estimated \$6.1 trillion in unrealized capital gains. Opportunity Zones leverage this pool of money to promote economic development by providing federal capital gains tax advantages for investments made in these areas. Investors can realize deferral and reduction of capital gains taxes in investments held for at least 5 years with additional incentives available for investments maintained in Opportunity Zones for 7 and 10 years. To be eligible, investments must be made through Qualified Opportunity Funds which are vehicles formed for investing in qualified Opportunity Zone property. Most Zones, given their designation as “distressed,” will have to strategically position themselves to attract investors.

Morehead-Rowan County’s opportunity Zone is highlighted in the map above. It encompasses much of the City of Morehead out to the western edge of the county along I-64. Opportunities for investment within the zone likely include new housing, industrial, and commercial development in the western area of the zone and downtown redevelopment and renovation in the City of Morehead.

Below are some key data points regarding the county’s Opportunity Zone.

Statistic	Opportunity Zone
Total Population	9,823
Median Age	24.9
Median Household Income	\$37,392
Percent Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	34.23%



## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

The focus group on Economic Development covered infrastructural concerns, challenges, assets, priorities, and opportunities. When asked about the overall economic outlook, participants cited recent industry growth and business attraction as a positive and cited tourism opportunities in particular.

Participants felt the biggest concern for economic development was around workforce. Specifically, the participants felt business attraction is positive, but that they are unable to maintain growth within industry due to a lack of workforce. Similar to the Education Focus Group, the participants cited livability in Morehead Rowan as a challenge for attraction and retention of a diverse workforce. Related to livability, participants focused on the lack of diverse housing types capable of attracting more residents.

An additional challenge discussed was the lack of zoning within the county. This has slowed growth in key areas of the county where developers are hesitant about placing investments due to the risk of unfavorable development being located near their properties. Additionally, while the City of Morehead allows the sale of alcoholic beverages, Rowan County is dry, limiting the attraction of certain restaurants and retail stores. Related to infrastructure challenges, focus group participants specified road issues, particularly US-60 between downtown and the lake.

The focus group discussed several key assets in the county, including Cave Run Lake, the availability of land for businesses at the MMRC Industrial Park, accessibility to the airport, and the network of educational institutions. The group expressed the need to clearly market these assets so Rowan County and Morehead can begin attracting diverse businesses to the area.

When asked about opportunities for economic development, the focus group provided a rich discussion on a wide variety of focuses for the community. Specifically, a focus on creating a downtown identity in the City of Morehead. Ideas on this topic include a downtown hotel, retail, distillery, and continuing to grow the small business incubator LaunchPad.

The focus group also discussed natural resources. The participants felt timber is a market rich in opportunity for Morehead-Rowan. Additionally, participants discussed partnerships with Morehead State University to build collaboration around workforce and education expansion.



## APPENDIX B: PUBLIC SURVEY



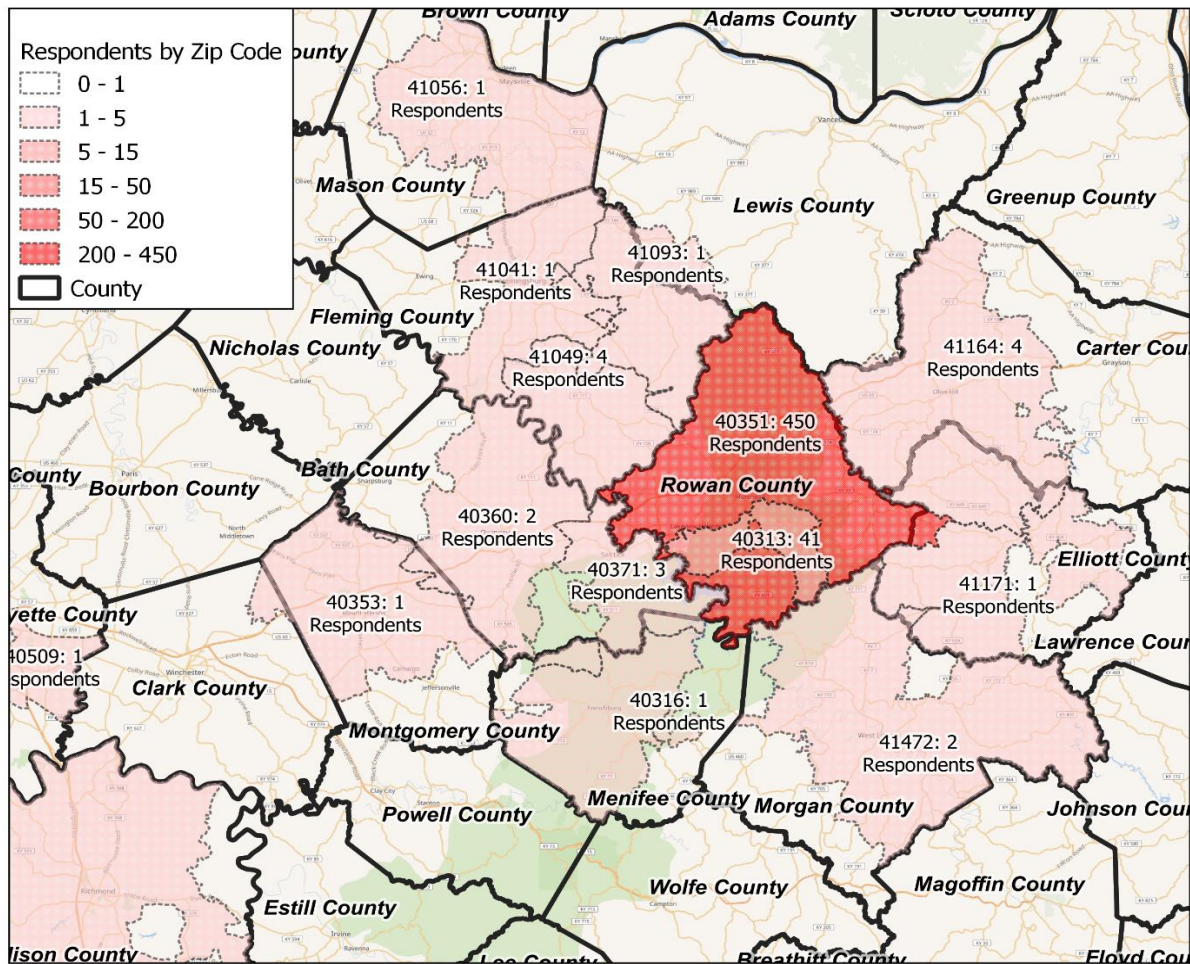
# OVERVIEW

An online survey was created and dispersed to all who live and/or work in the City of Morehead-Rowan County. The purpose of the survey was to gather community feedback about priorities and needs for economic and community development. The survey consisted of 24 questions relating to key topic areas of health, wellness, and safety, livability and recreation, education, environmental sustainability, and economy and infrastructure. The survey was distributed through the Moving Forward Morehead-Rowan website, as well as on social media outlets. In total, 541 individuals started and completed the survey, with a summary of the results below.

## Survey Response Statistics

Of the 541 individuals completing the survey, 511 indicated that they lived in Rowan County, and 494 provided a zip code that confirmed their residence in Rowan County. The remainder of respondents worked within Rowan County. The distribution by zip code of those completing the survey—including both residents and employees in the county—is shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**

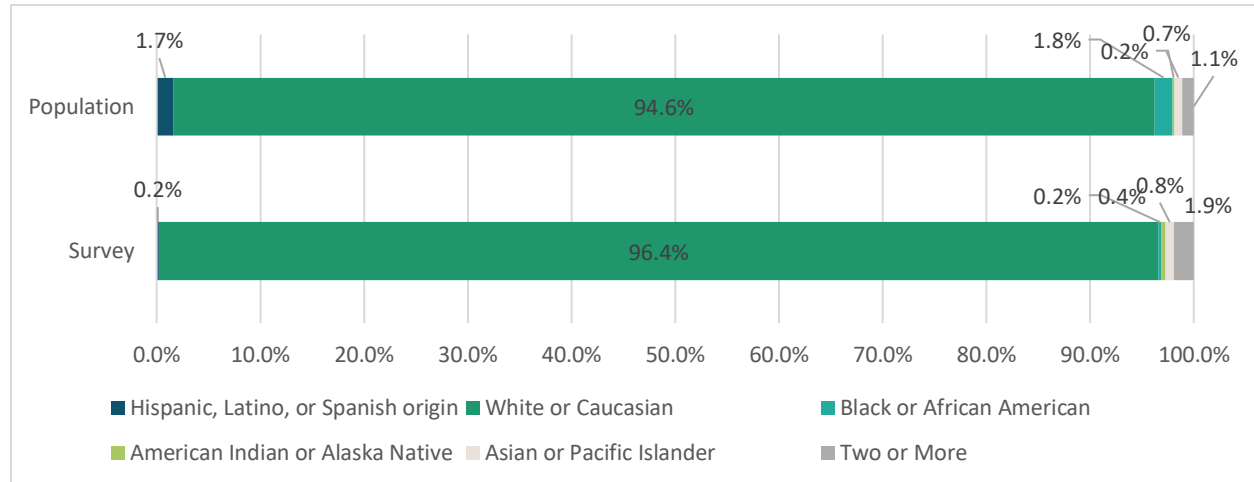
Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Zip Code





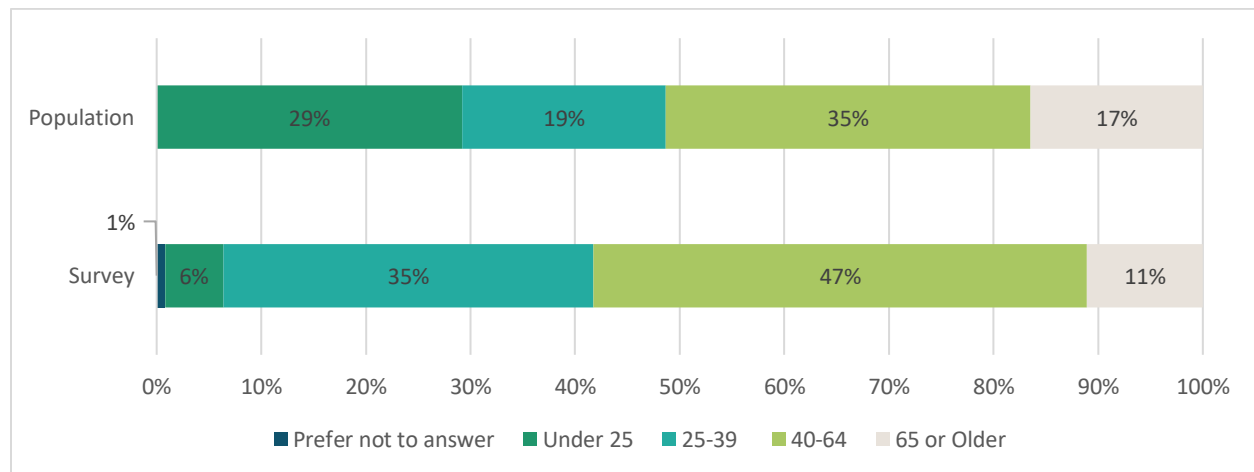
With 19,793 adult residents in Rowan County, the survey garnered a 2.6% response rate overall, meaning that survey responses are representative of the general population to within a 4.3% margin of error.<sup>22</sup> Among the 511 residents of Rowan County who responded to the survey, demographic characteristics were also fairly representative of the county as a whole. For example, as shown in Figure 2, the overwhelming majority (94.6%) of Rowan County residents identify as White or Caucasian, and this is reflected in survey results, in which 96.4% of respondents identified as White or Caucasian.

Figure 2: Distribution of Rowan County Population vs. Survey Respondents by Race/Ethnicity



The distribution of respondents by age was also relatively similar to that of Rowan County's adult population. However, there was one significant difference. While 29% of Rowan County's adults are between 18 and 24 (a number heavily influenced by the presence of Morehead State University), only 6% of survey respondents were in this group. Instead, there were many more respondents in the 25-39 and 40-64 age ranges.

Figure 3: Distribution of Rowan County Adults vs. Survey Respondents by Age

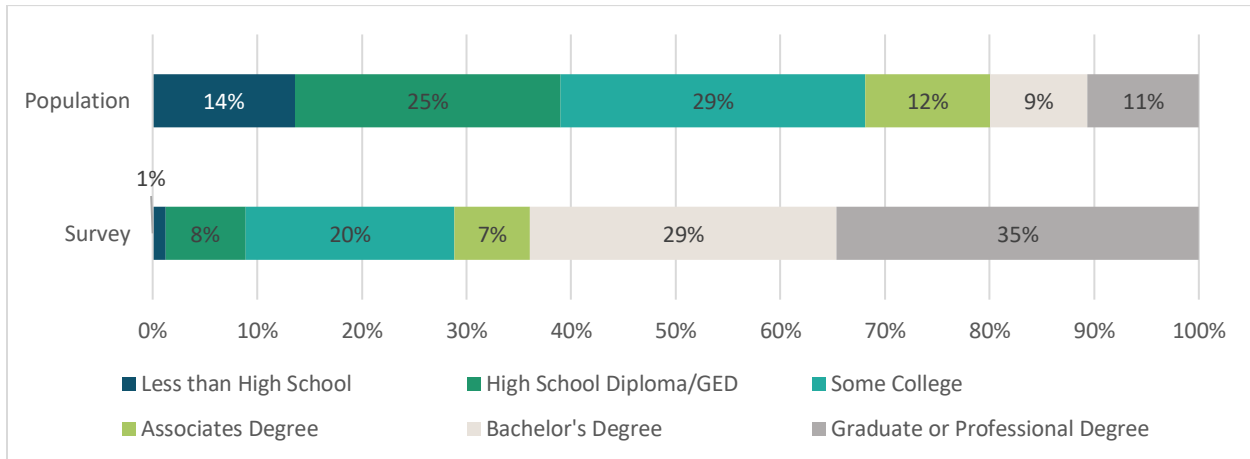


<sup>22</sup> Based on a sample size of 511 and a 95% confidence level.



Where survey responses do not so closely match the general population is in terms of educational attainment. Whereas Rowan County residents are relatively evenly split between all levels of educational attainment, survey respondents were predominantly those with bachelor's or Graduate degrees. Nevertheless, there were 175 respondents with less than a bachelor's degree, and a further 56 who did not describe their level of education.

Figure 4: Distribution of Rowan County Adults vs. Survey Respondents by Education

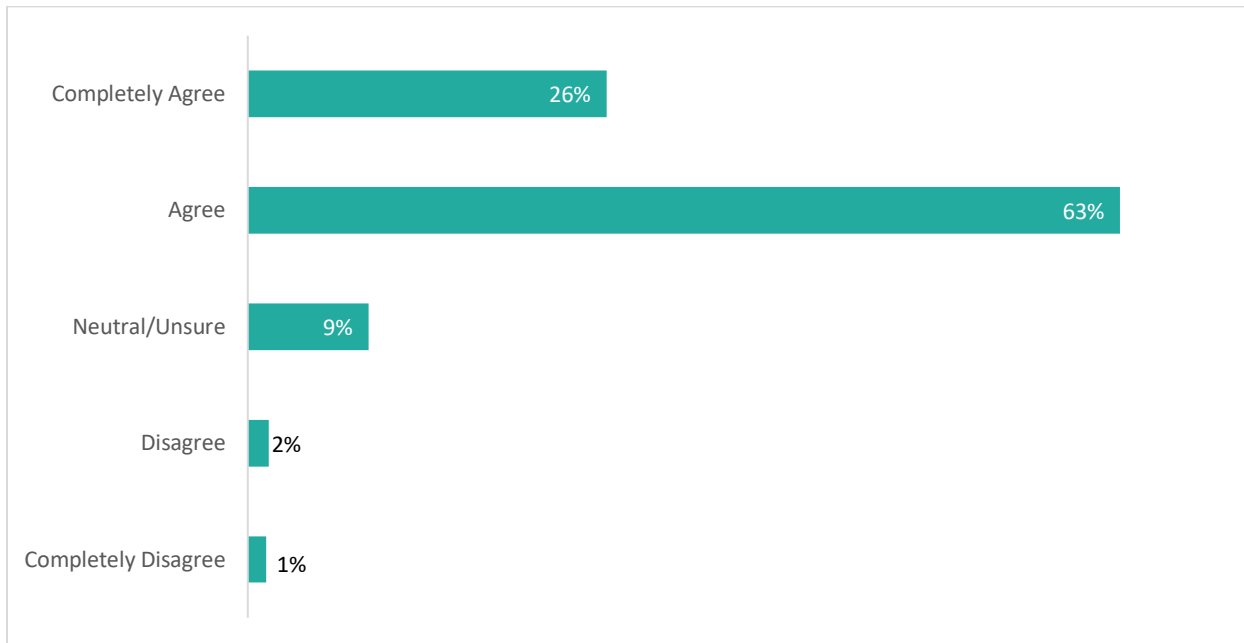


## Health, Wellness, and Safety

Respondents were asked about topics related to health, wellness, and safety. Rowan County residents largely agreed that the County is a safe place to live. Out of 531 respondents for this question, 63% agreed and 26% strongly agreed that it is a safe place to live. About 9% of respondents were neutral about the County's safety and only 3% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

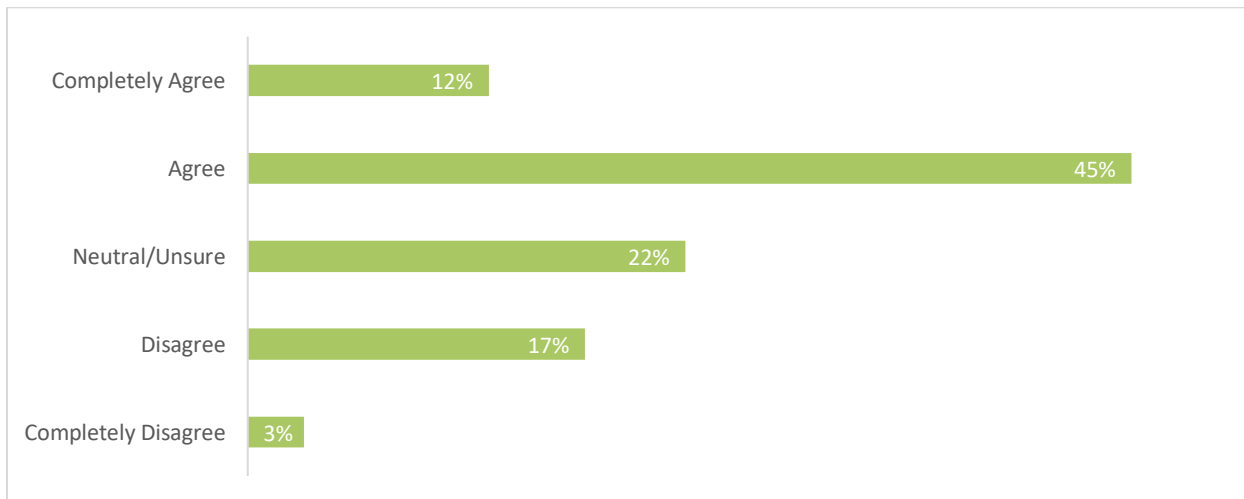


Figure 5: Safe Place to Live



Aside from safety, residents were asked about the County’s healthcare system. A significant number of residents, 45%, agreed that the County has sufficient access to healthcare. Many residents, 22%, were neutral and neither agreed nor disagreed about access to healthcare. Approximately 20% of respondents thought that their needs were not being addressed in relation to healthcare access in Rowan County.

Figure 6: Sufficient Access to Healthcare in Rowan County

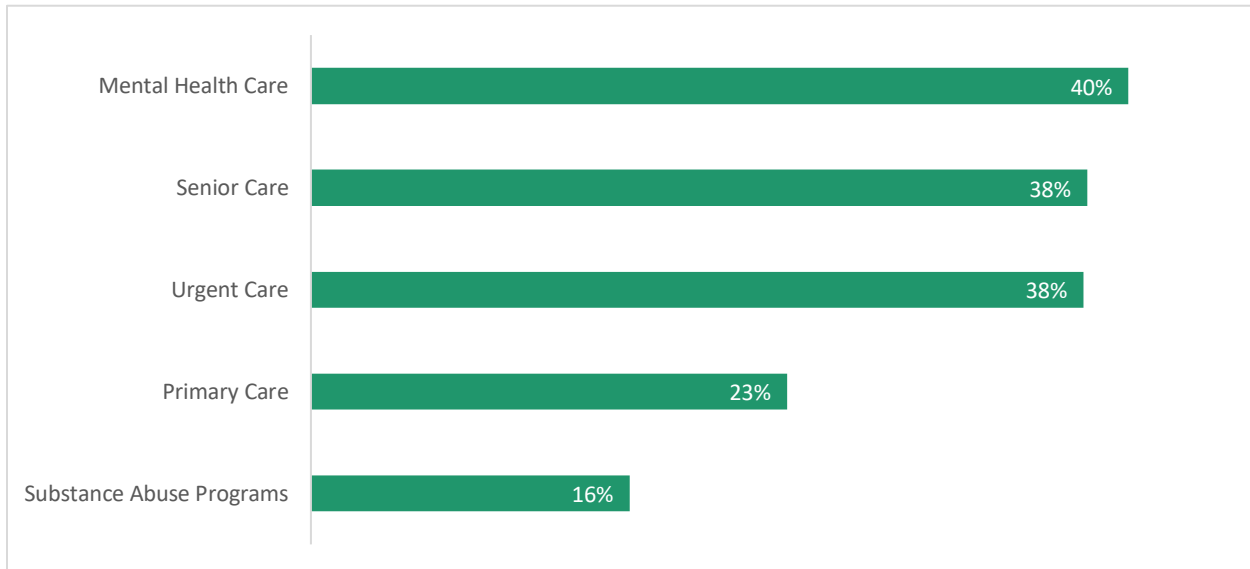




More specifically, when it comes to healthcare, residents were asked to identify what health services, if any, are missing in the Morehead-Rowan County area. Respondents were asked to choose one or more services that they felt were lacking. The most-selected service was Mental Health (40%), followed by Senior Care (38%) and Urgent Care (38%). Additional services listed in the comments included specialty services, such as dermatology, services for individuals with disabilities, women’s health, and eye doctors. Respondents suggested clinics that offer free or discounted services for those without insurance. In addition,

*Figure 7: Health Services that Rowan County Lacks*

one respondent suggested alternatives to traditional healthcare, such as fitness centers or holistic care centers. A few respondents expressed the need for



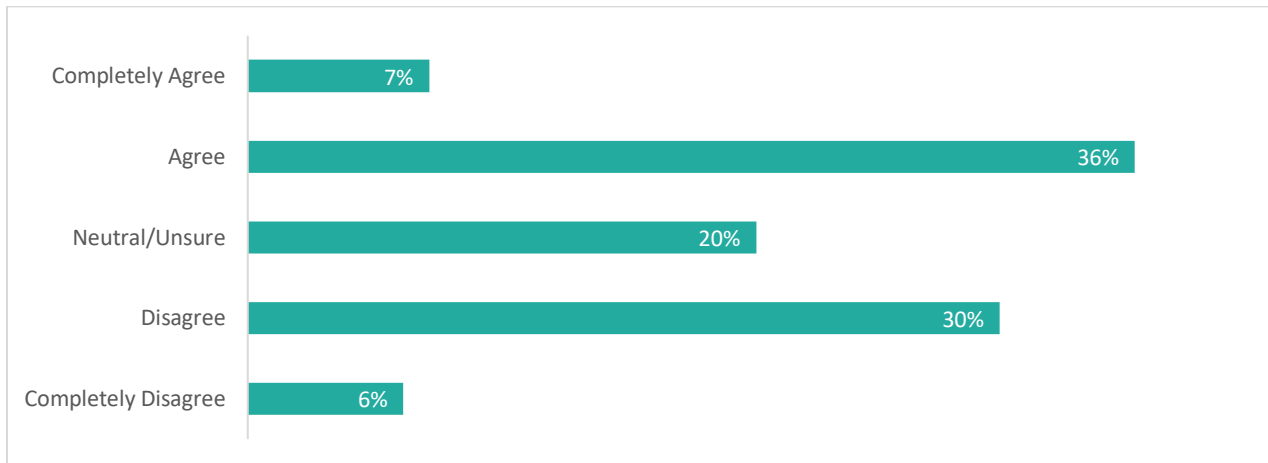
health services for individuals with autism, exclusively.

Additionally, those surveyed were asked about the ease of access to healthy and nutritious food options in the County. Responses to this question showed less consensus and offered a varied outlook. About 36% of residents agreed that there is easy access to nutritious food, while 30% disagreed. About 20% were neutral or unsure about whether there is easy access to nutritious food options in the County. Survey respondents were from a variety of locations throughout the County and region, which could be related to the varying responses on the ease of access. For example, respondents in 40313 were more likely to indicate easy access than those in 40351





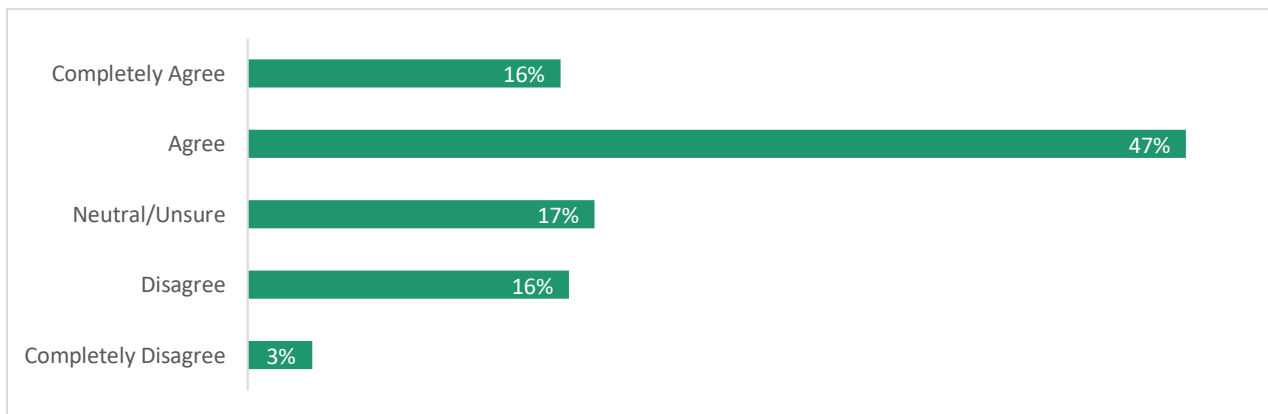
Figure 8: Easy Access to Healthy and Nutritious Food Options in Rowan County



## Livability and Recreation

Respondents were asked about the livability and recreation opportunities in Rowan County. Specifically, respondents were asked about whether they were able to obtain the type of housing needed in the County. About 47% agreed and 16% strongly agreed that they were able to obtain the housing needed for their lifestyle and family. In addition, about 17% of respondents were unsure or neutral, while 16% disagreed that they were able to find the housing needed.

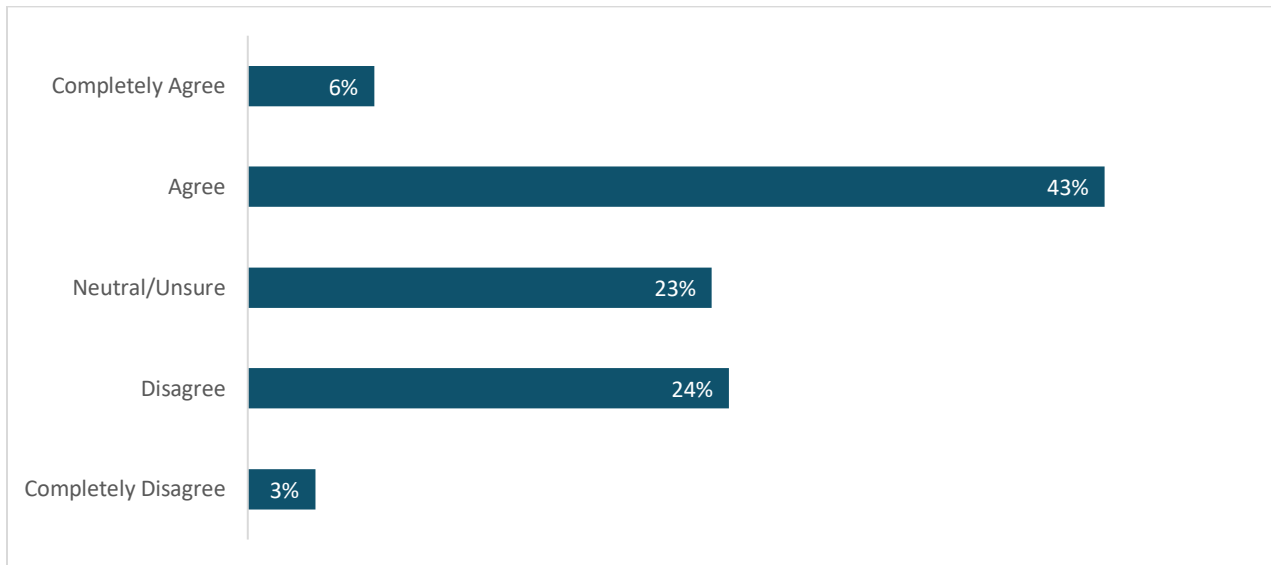
Figure 9: Able Obtain the Type of Housing Needed Rowan County



Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the statement that the County has amenities that make it a good place to live. Out of 473 respondents to this question, 43% agreed that the amenities make Rowan County a good place to live. In comparison, 24% disagreed on this subject. In total, about 23% felt neutral or unsure about whether the County's current amenities make it a good place to live.

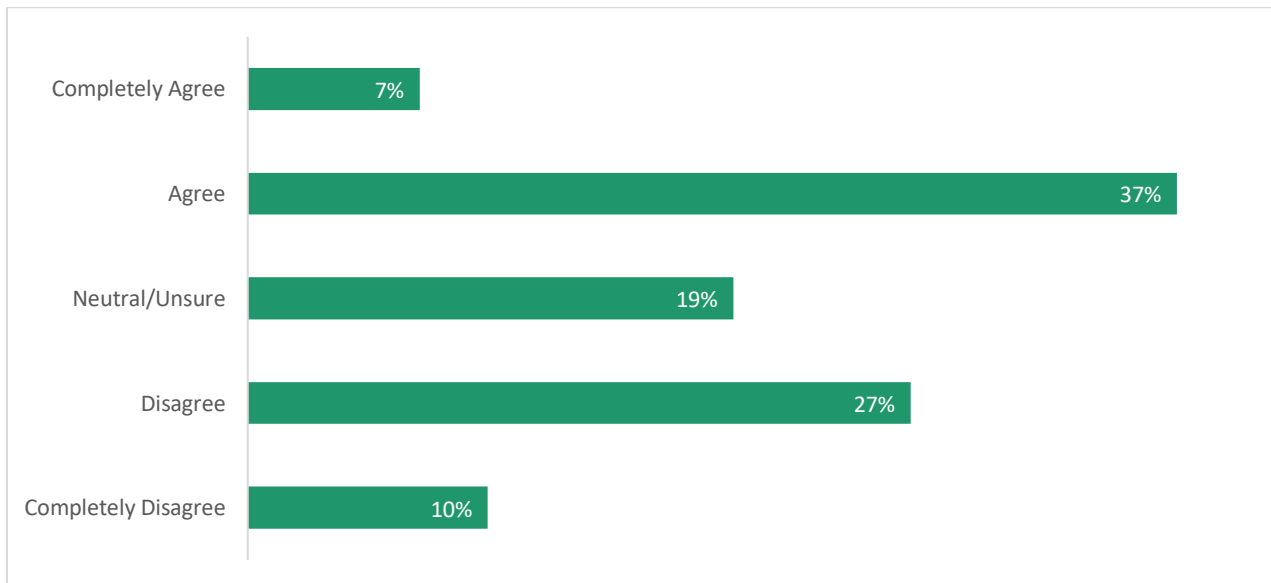


Figure 10: The County has Amenities that Make it a Good Place to Live



Furthermore, respondents were asked about recreation in the County. Specifically, the survey asked whether respondents agree or disagree with the statement that there are good options for recreation in Rowan County. There were several respondents, 27%, who disagreed with there being good options for recreation in the County. A total of 27% agreed, with 7% agreeing strongly that the options are good for recreation.

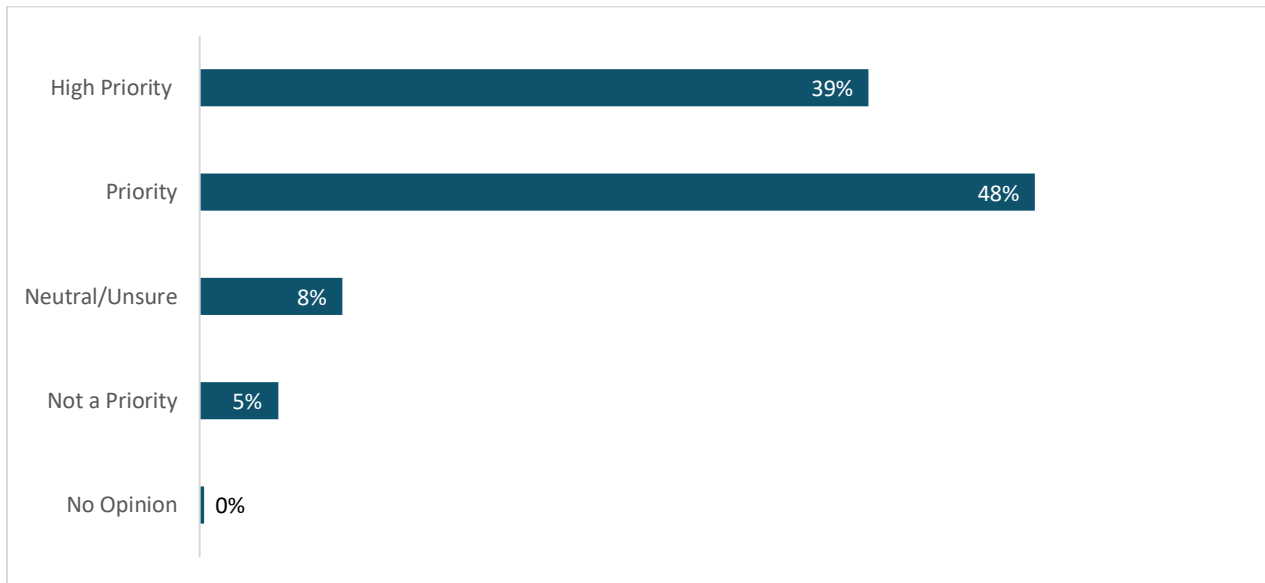
Figure 11: Good Options for Recreation in Rowan County



Related to the topic of recreation, respondents were asked to rank the priority level of outdoor recreation and quality of life in relation to Rowan County Government. The majority of individuals, about 87%, felt this topic should be a high priority or priority. Only 5% felt that this topic does not need to be at the forefront of the County government.

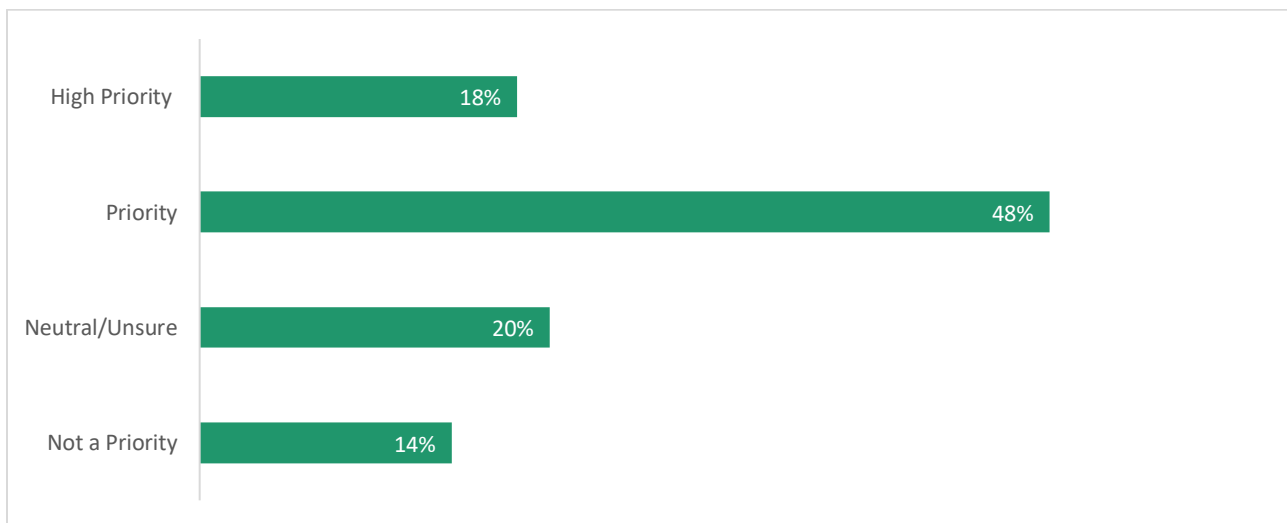


Figure 12: Should Rowan County Government Focus on Outdoor Recreation and Quality of Life



Respondents were asked about whether the County Government should focus on tourism development as well. Again, a majority of respondents, 66%, saw this topic as a high priority or priority. Unlike the topic of outdoor recreation and quality of life, more respondents (20%) felt neutral or unsure about whether the County Government should focus on tourism, versus the 8% that were unsure or neutral about government focus on recreation and quality of life.

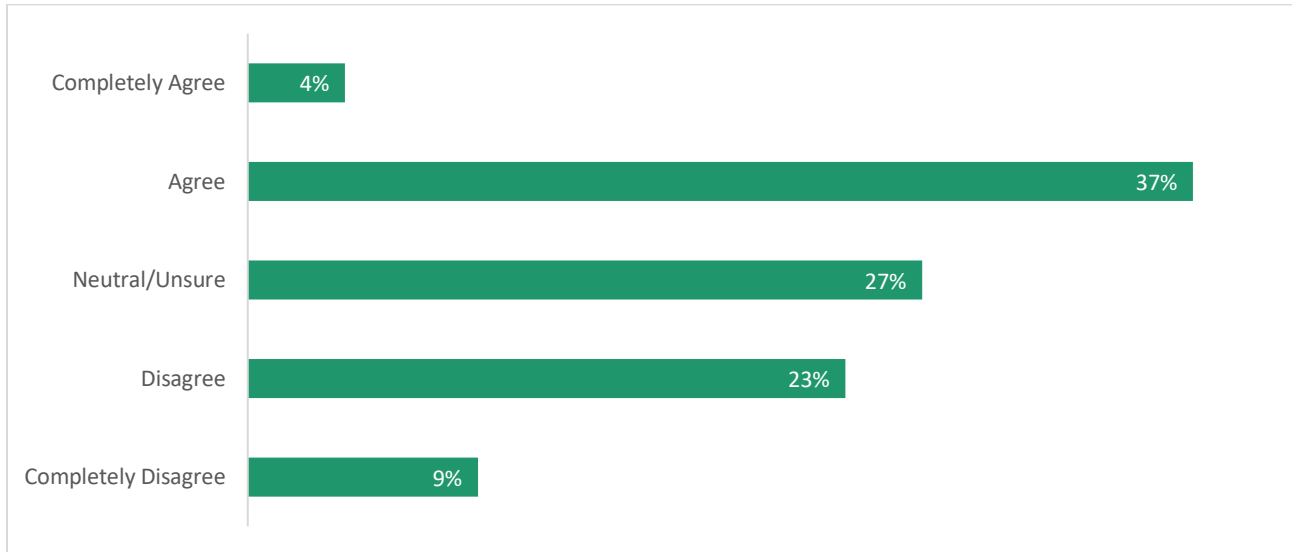
Figure 13: Should Rowan County Government Focus on Tourism Development



Respondents were asked if they agree that there are a variety of recreational opportunities in Rowan County. Again, there was a varying level of agreement in responses. Of the 498 responders, 37% agreed that there are a good variety to fit their needs. In addition, 27% were unsure or neutral, and 23% disagreed. Individuals did not completely agree or disagree strongly, with only 4% of respondents who completely agreed and 9% who disagreed.

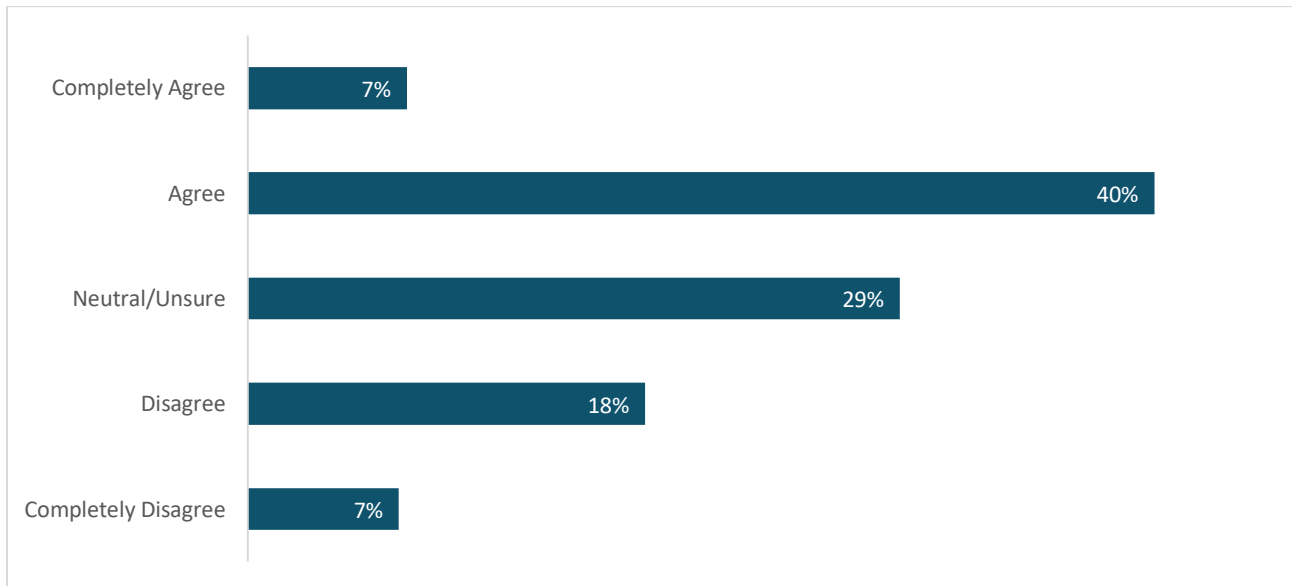


Figure 14: There Are a Variety of Recreational Opportunities in Rowan County



Of the variety of recreational opportunities, respondents were asked whether the opportunities are accessible to residents. Many respondents, 40%, agreed that recreation opportunities are accessible for them. Out of the respondents, only 18% disagreed, but 29% were neutral and unsure.

Figure 15: Recreation Opportunities are Accessible to Residents

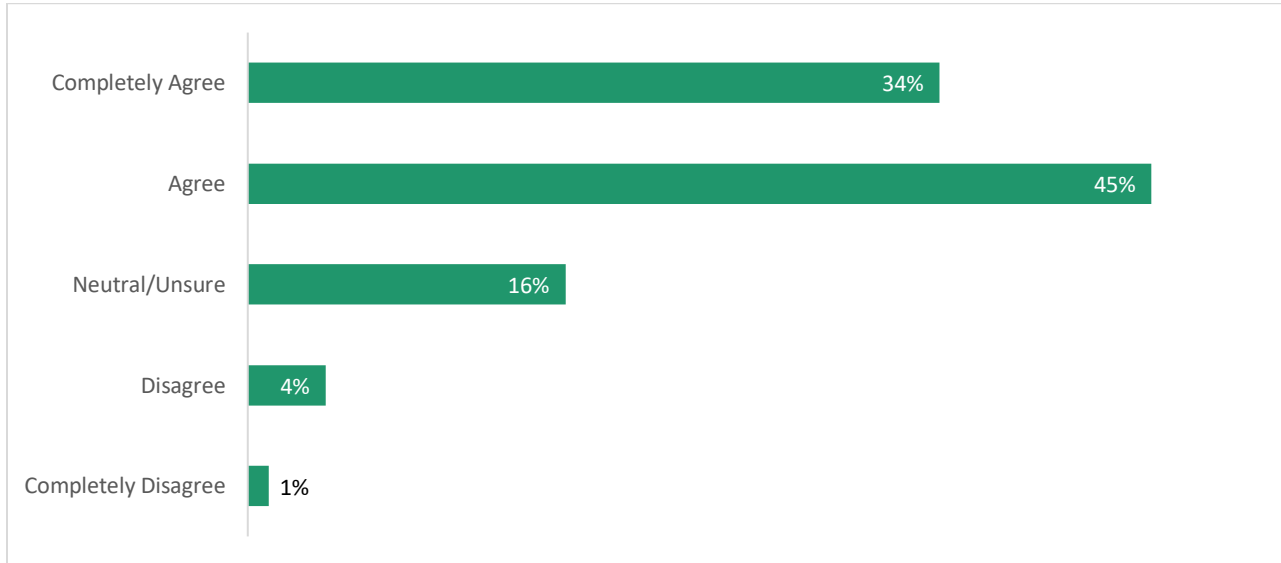


In addition to asking about accessibility, the survey asked about possible connections to recreation opportunities via hiking, walking, and biking paths. Although 40% of respondents felt recreational opportunities were accessible in the County, 45% of respondents feel there should be developed connections to recreation opportunities. A sizable number of respondents, 34%, strongly



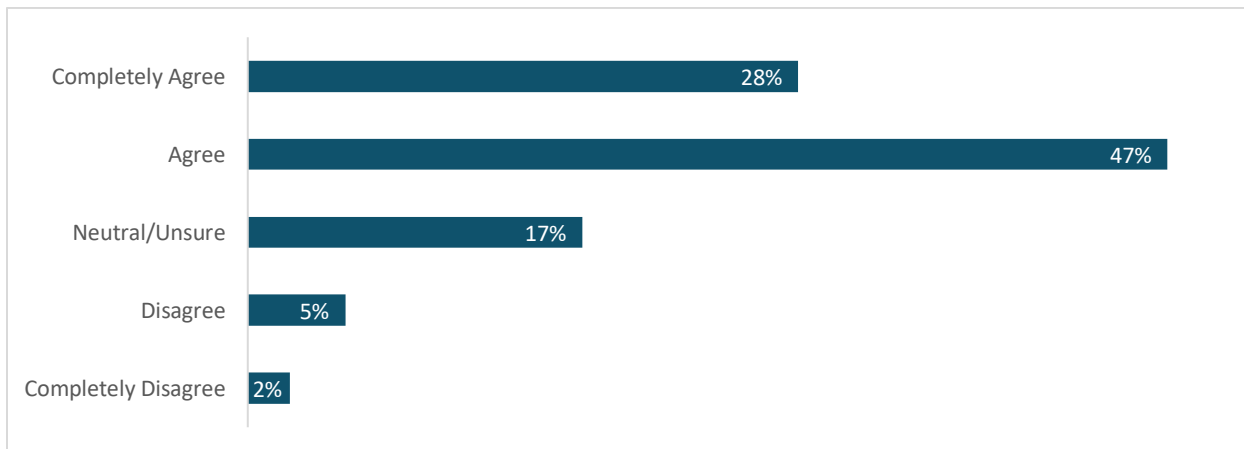
agreed with the need for hiking, walking, and biking paths, indicating a strong interest for these types of connection.

Figure 16: Should Develop Connections to Recreation Opportunities via Hiking/Walking/Biking Paths



Respondents were also asked whether they agree if public transportation should provide access to recreation options in the County. Similar to the previous question on utilizing pathways for connection, the majority of respondents completely agreed or agreed (75%) that public transportation should provide access to recreation. Only 2% of respondents completely disagreed with this statement, and 5% disagreed.

Figure 17: Public Transportation Should Provide Access to Recreation Options in County



Respondents were asked to choose one or more amenities that are needed in Rowan County. The question included an open-ended section of Other. Out of the respondents, 69% selected Family Activities and 68% selected Restaurants

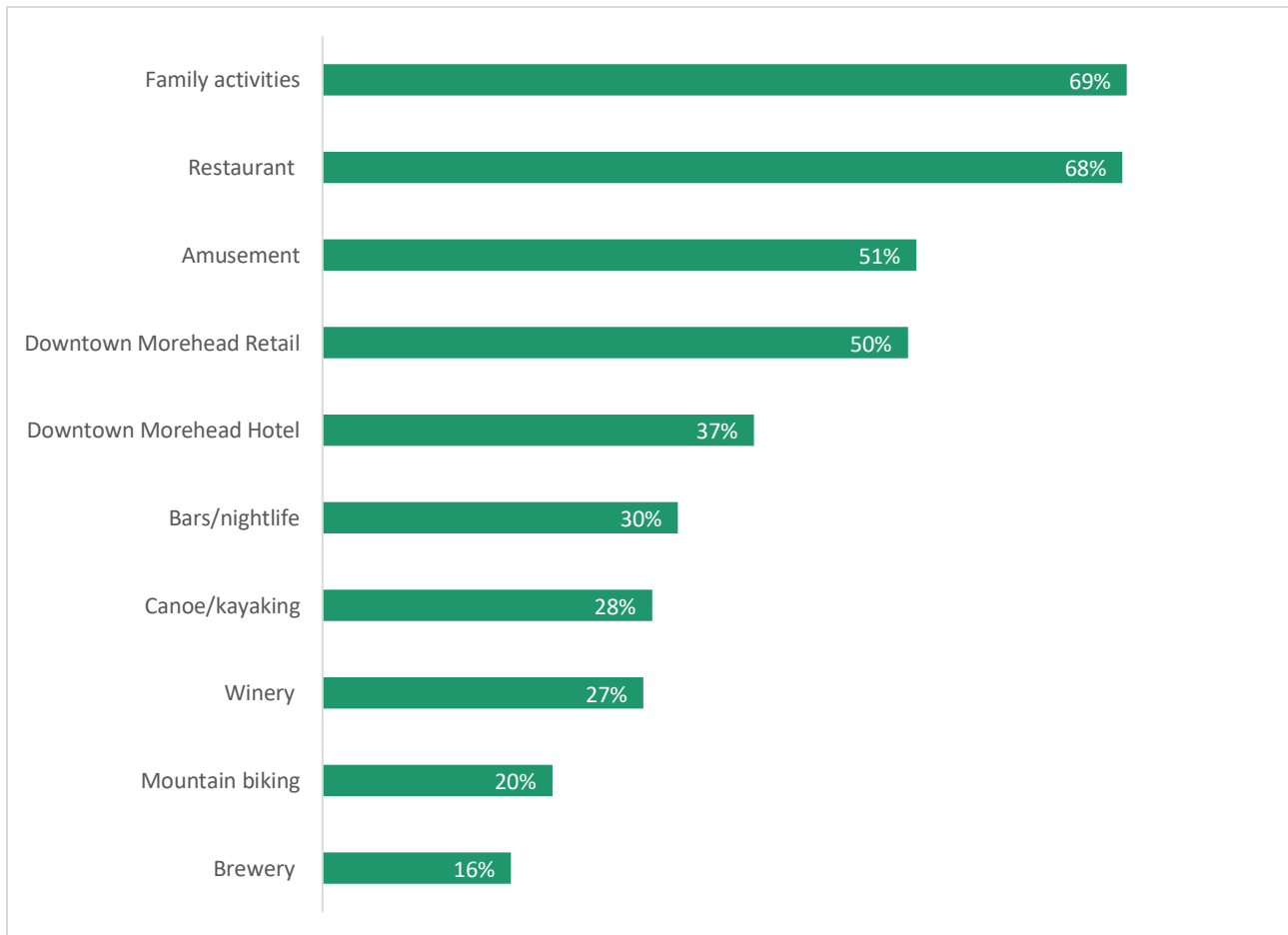


as additional amenities needed in the County. Additionally, Amusement was selected by 51% of respondents. The amenity that received the lowest interest was Brewery with about 16% of respondents selecting the subject.

The Other selection generated a variety of suggestions and ideas. While many of these answers could fall into the provided categories, they offered more specific amenities. For example, respondents suggested outdoor recreational activities. More exclusively, a few respondents suggested a community swimming pool as an example of outdoor activity. Respondents had suggestions for amenities relating to specific populations. For young adults, one respondent would like to see places to gather, events, and shopping. Additionally, activities for seniors were amplified in the Other category.

The Other category listed specific restaurants respondents wanted to see in the County. A good steakhouse, café, restaurants with healthy, quick options were all suggested. A location that was consistent among respondents was downtown, specifically in the currently empty retail locations.

Figure 18: Amenities, if any, Needed in Rowan County



## Education and Community Involvement

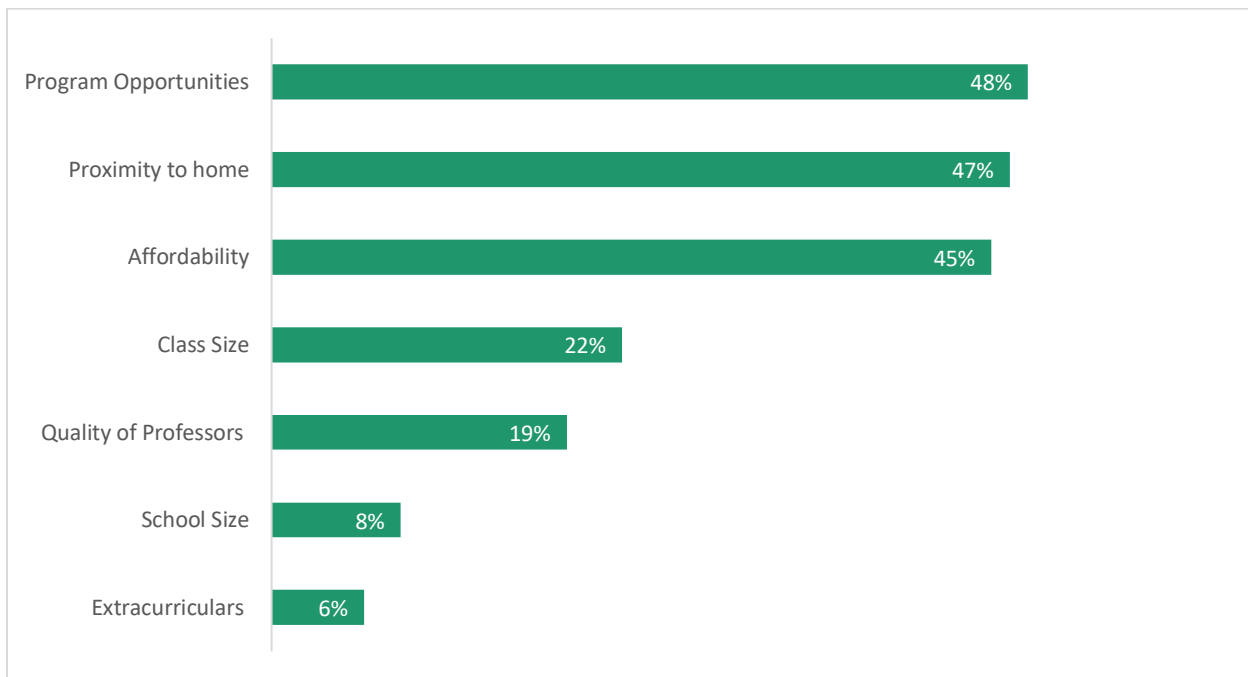
Residents and employees within Rowan County were also asked about education and community involvement. Specifically, respondents were asked



about education related to the public-school system and post-secondary opportunities. When participants were asked whether they have children who currently attend a College or University, about 82% did not. Of the 18% who responded yes, the location at which the student attended varied greatly. For most, a specific college or university was not provided. About 9% of respondents specified their child does or did go to Morehead State University. Other locations listed included University of Kentucky, Maysville Community, and less expressively, out-of-state.

Respondents were then asked why their child chose their college or university. Most selected included program opportunities (48%), proximity to home (47%), and affordability (45%). Respondents were also able to answer through the Other category. This allowed participants to shed specific insight on the college and university decision making process. The most cited reasons were related to program opportunity, scholarships, and more opportunity.

Figure 19: Why Child Chose College or University



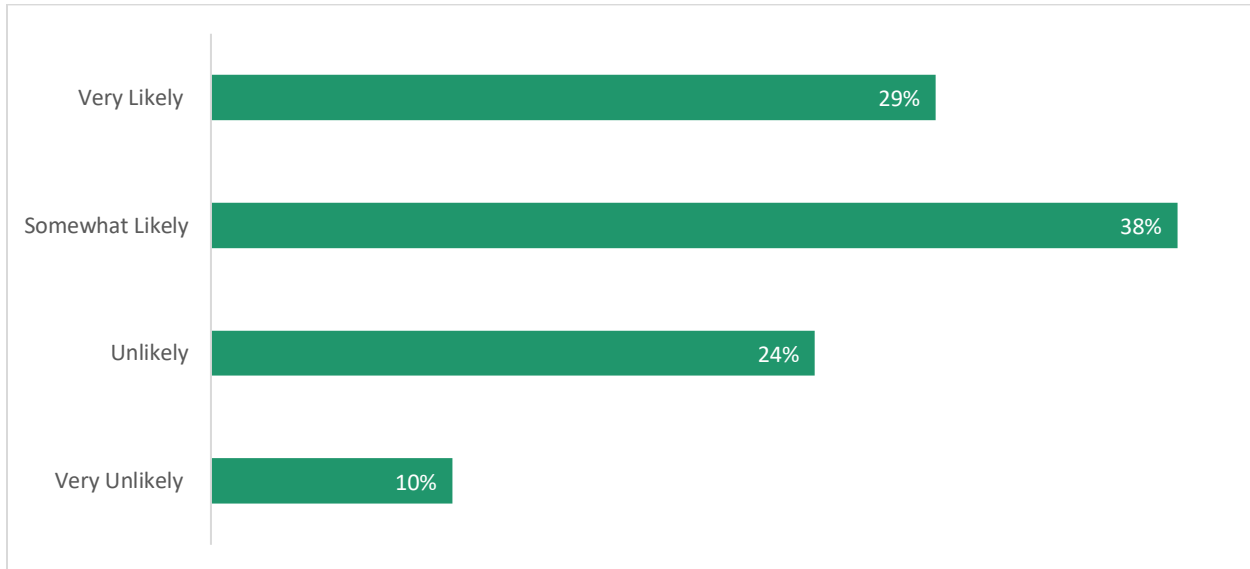
In addition, among respondents whose children attend Morehead State vs. those attending other colleges, the biggest differentiators were proximity to home and program offerings. Of those whose children attended Morehead State, 70% listed proximity to home as a factor, compared to 18% of those attending schools elsewhere. Conversely, 32.5% of Morehead State parents listed program opportunities as a factor, while this was a factor for 60% of respondents with children at other schools.

Respondents were asked if they are a student at Morehead State University (MSU). Of the 541 respondents to the survey, only 4% were full-time (3%) or part-time (1%) students. Of the MSU students, it is varied on whether they will remain in Rowan County five years after the date of graduation. Only 10% of individuals were very unlikely to leave. When asked why respondents answered 'unlikely,' reasons related to the community quality of life were cited the most.



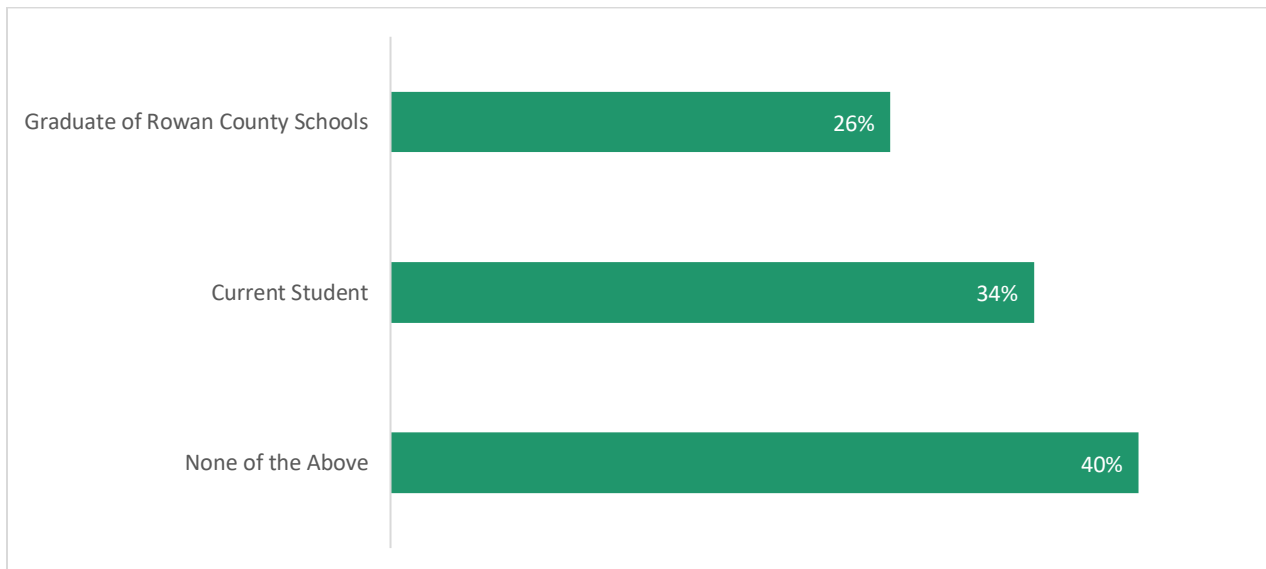
Specifically, respondents did not like the small-town size, desire more opportunities, and one individual felt there was no job available in the County for post-graduation.

Figure 20: Likely to be Living in Rowan County Five Years after the Date of Graduation



In addition to being asked about post-secondary opportunities, respondents were asked about the Rowan County School System. A total of 26% of respondents had a graduate of the Rowan County Schools, while 34% had a current student in Rowan Schools.

Figure 21: Do you have Children who Attend or have Graduated from the Rowan County School System



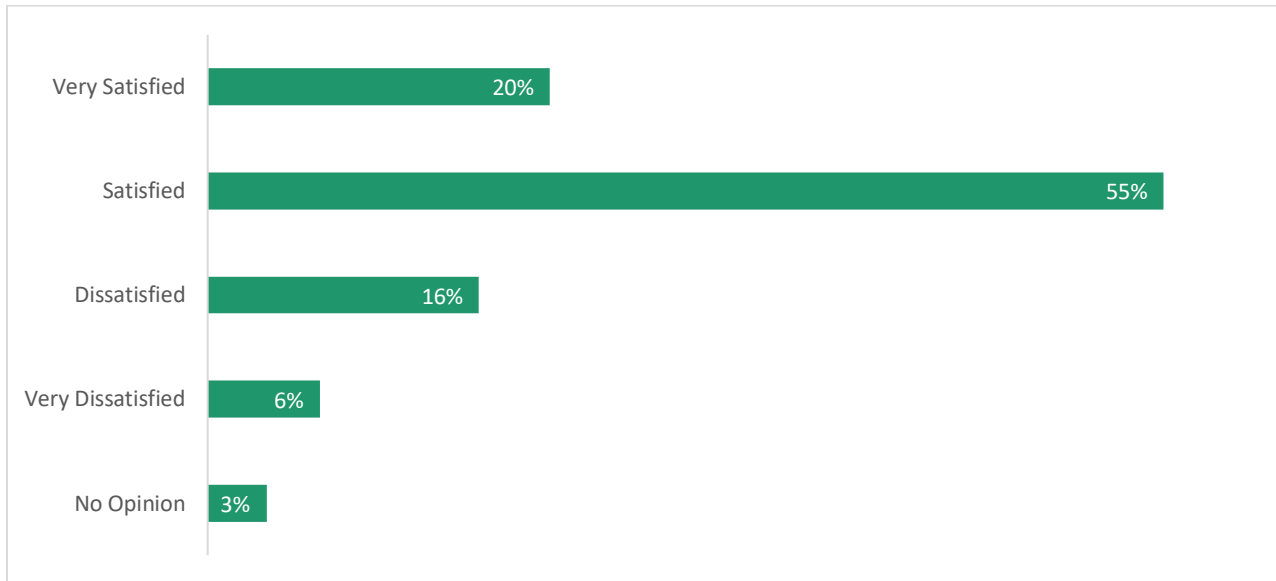
Of the respondents with a current student in school or a graduate of Rowan County Schools, a majority (55%) were satisfied with the quality of the schools. Additionally, 20% were very satisfied, with only 6% very dissatisfied. Only 3%





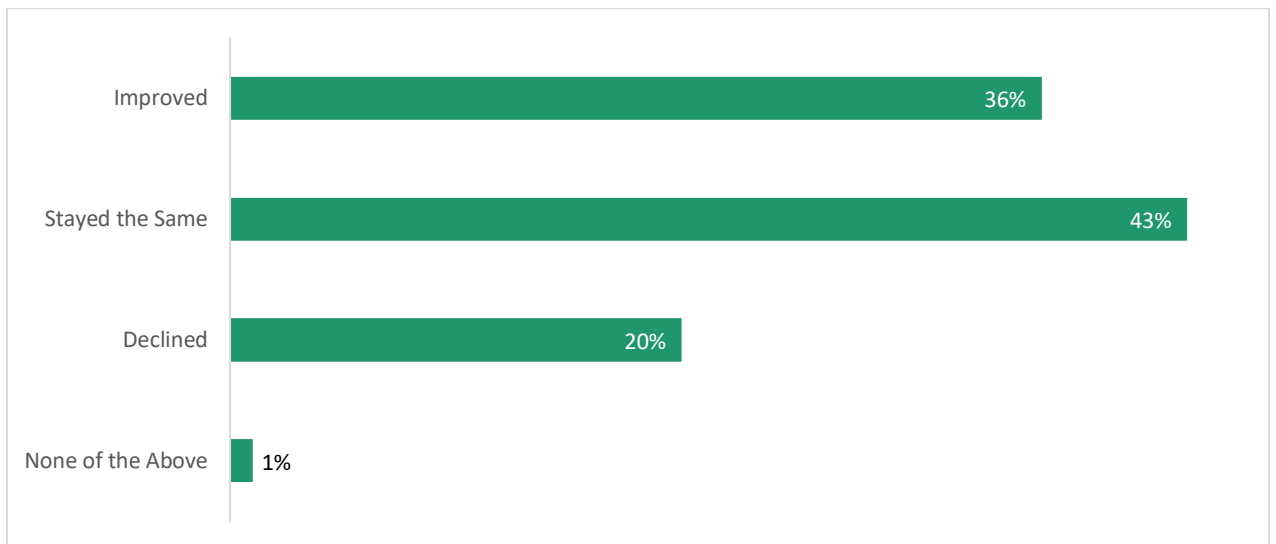
of respondents did not have an opinion on their satisfaction with the quality of Public Schools in Rowan County School District.

Figure 22: Satisfaction with the Quality of Public Schools in Rowan County School District



Respondents were asked about whether the quality of education offered in Rowan County has improved, stayed the same, or declined. Responses to this question were varied. 36% of respondents felt the education improved, 43% saw it as staying the same, and 20% saw a decline. Overall, majority (79%) of respondents felt the quality improved or stayed the same.

Figure 23: Quality of education offered in the Rowan County School System improved, stayed the same, or declined



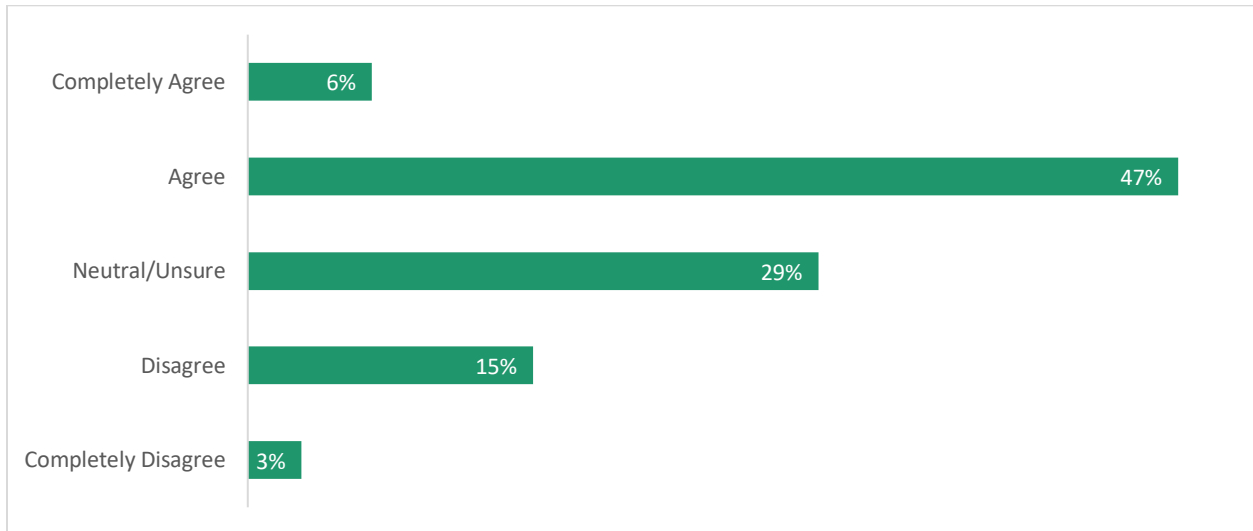
## Environmental Sustainability

The survey included questions about Rowan County’s environmental sustainability. Specifically, respondents were asked whether they agree that



Rowan County takes good care of its natural environment. Out of 475 responses, 47% agreed that the County takes care of its environment. While a majority of respondents agreed or completely agreed (6%), 29% were neutral or unsure of this question.

Figure 24: Rowan County Takes Good Care of its Natural Environment

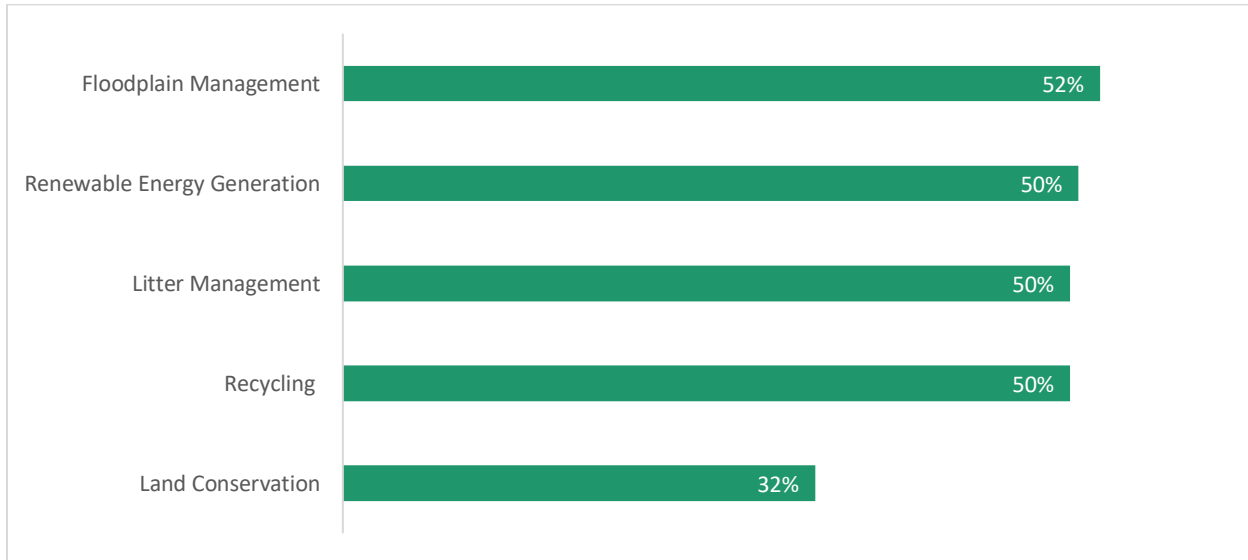


Respondents were then asked what specific environmental practices needed improvements in the County. Participants were able to select more than one, as well as list additional suggestions in the Other category. Almost every listed environmental practice was selected by about 50% of respondents, aside from land conservation, which was selected by 32% of respondents.

The main practices suggested in the Other category included pick up recycling, eco-tourism, education, and stream protection and management. More specifically, respondents felt the need to educate starting in the school system. In addition, stream management was connected to varying factors. One respondent felt the creeks need to be cleaned out, due to consistent flooding. Another respondent suggested the protection of streams at a governmental level. Additionally, zoning and zoning enforcement was highlighted by a few respondents to improve the County's environmental practices.

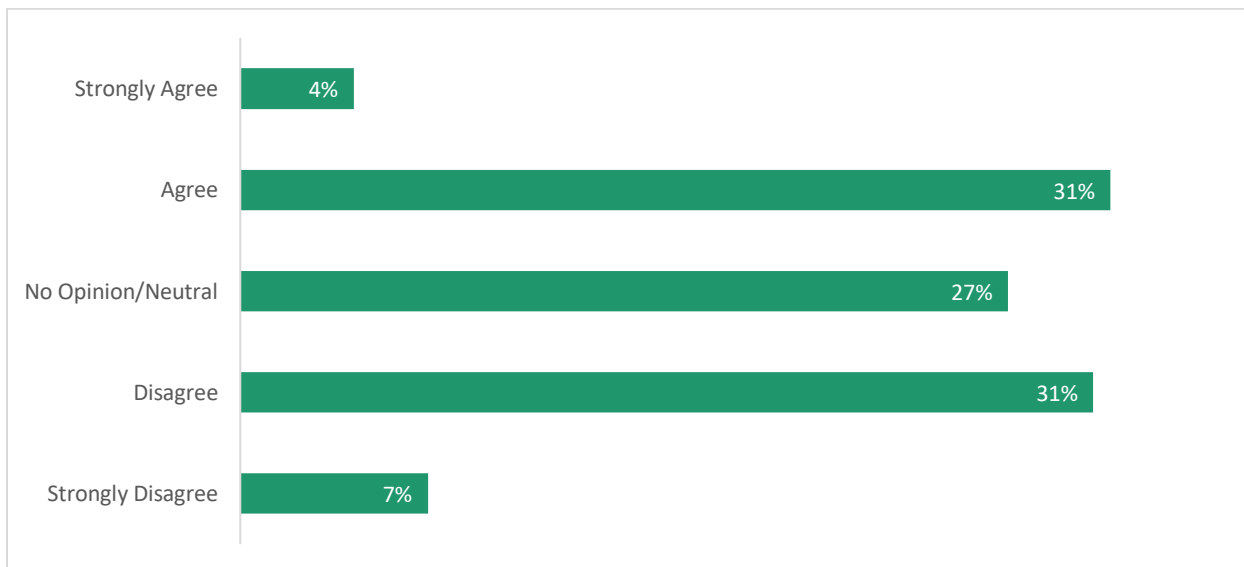


Figure 25: Environmental practices, if any, needing Improvement in Rowan County



Respondents were asked if Rowan County effectively uses the Daniel Boone National Forest for recreation purposes. Responses to this question showed less consensus and offered a varied response. About 31% of respondents agreed that the County effectively uses the National Forest. A total of 27% were neutral or had no opinion on the question. There were 31% of individuals who disagreed with the statement, equal to the number of respondents who agreed. A total of 491 individuals responded to the question, which is about 91% of the total responses to the entire survey, showing this is an important topic to the residents of Rowan County.

Figure 26: Rowan County Effectively Uses the Daniel Boone National Forest for Recreation Purposes

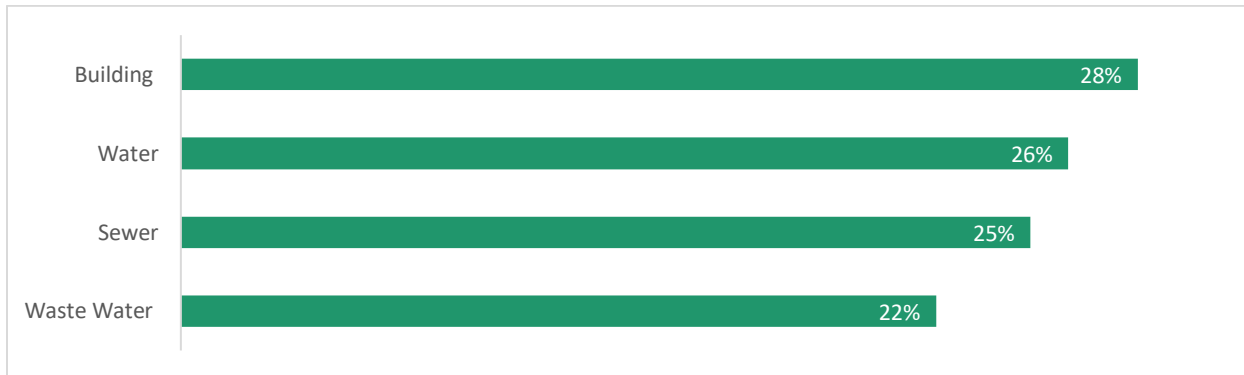




## Economy and Infrastructure

The survey included questions on Rowan County’s economy and infrastructure. Respondents were asked what infrastructure improvements are most needed in the County. Four options were provided: building, water, sewer, and wastewater. All four options had about the same response rate, with the most selections for building (28%), and the least for wastewater (22%). In addition to the four categories provided, respondents could provide additional detail and suggestions through an “Additional” category.

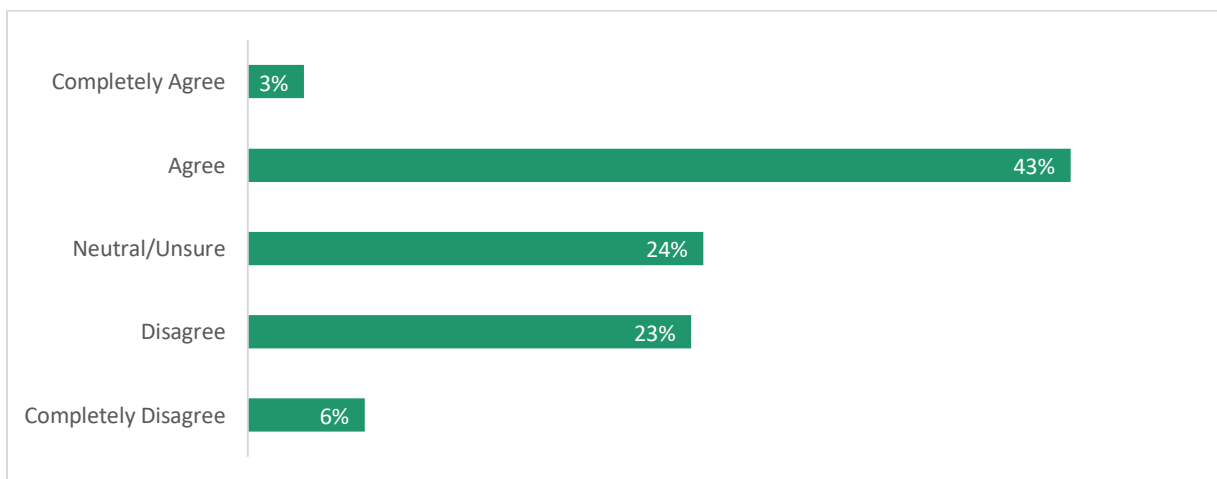
Figure 27: Infrastructure Improvements Most Needed in Rowan County



The “Additional” option generated a variety of suggestions and findings. A few respondents specified improvements for public transportation and signage, specifically. In addition, broadband, I-64, and stormwater improvements were identified frequently. One respondent mentioned the need to expand roadways to accommodate growing traffic. Respondents also shared that they felt the airport needed more infrastructure to expand and maintain its growth.

Respondents were also asked about the condition of roads in Rowan County. About 43% of respondents felt the roads in Rowan County are in good shape. Additionally, 24% of respondents felt unsure or neutral about the shape of the roads, and 23% disagreed about the shape of the roadways in the County.

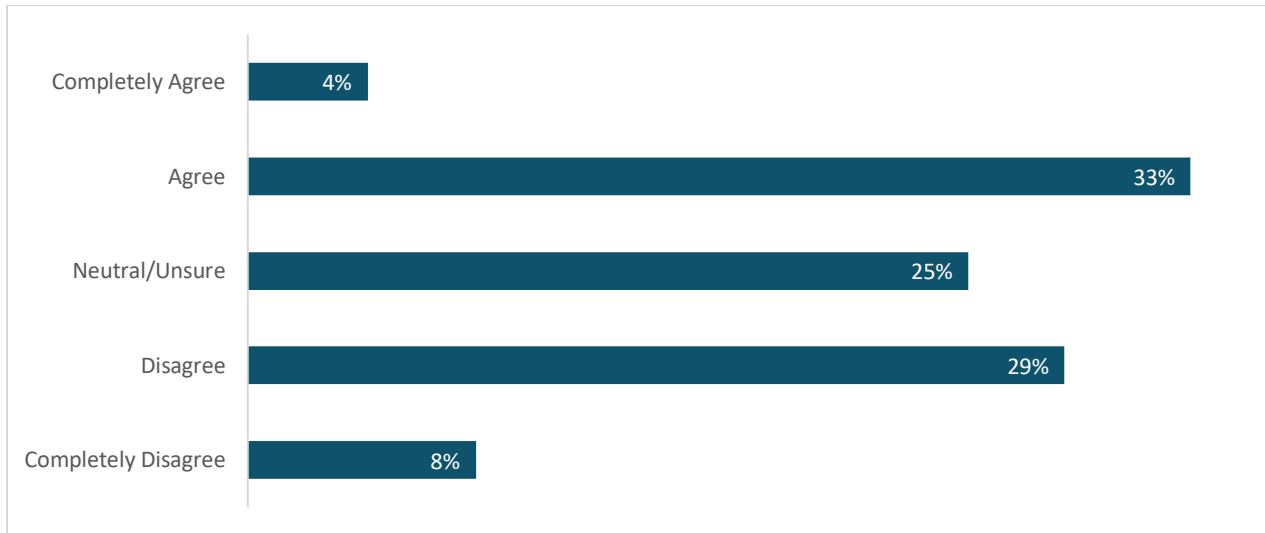
Figure 28: Roads in Rowan County are in Good Shape





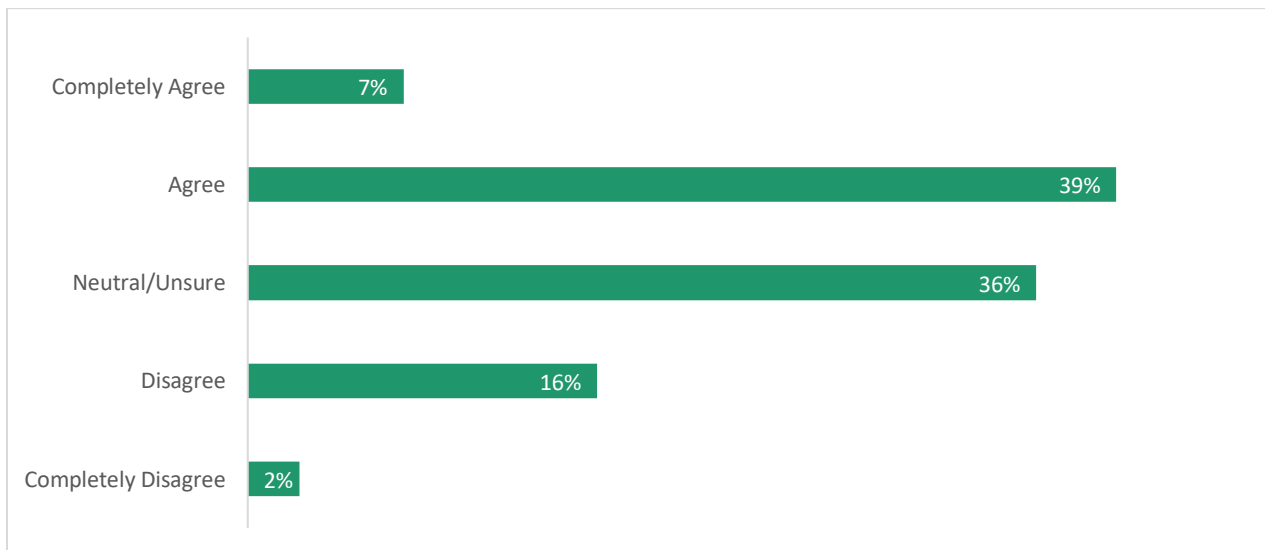
In addition to roads and infrastructure, participants were asked if there are good jobs in Rowan County. Out of 471 responses, there was no consensus on this question. About 33% of respondents agreed, while 29% disagreed that there are good jobs available. Additionally, about 25% were neutral or unsure about this question.

Figure 29: Good Jobs in Rowan County



While there was no consensus on whether there are good jobs in the County, the question regarding the quality of employees available to fill open jobs in the County was more conclusive. Respondents were asked whether they agree that there are quality employees available to fill jobs within the County. Approximately 39% of respondents agreed to this statement. Many respondents, 36%, were unsure or neutral.

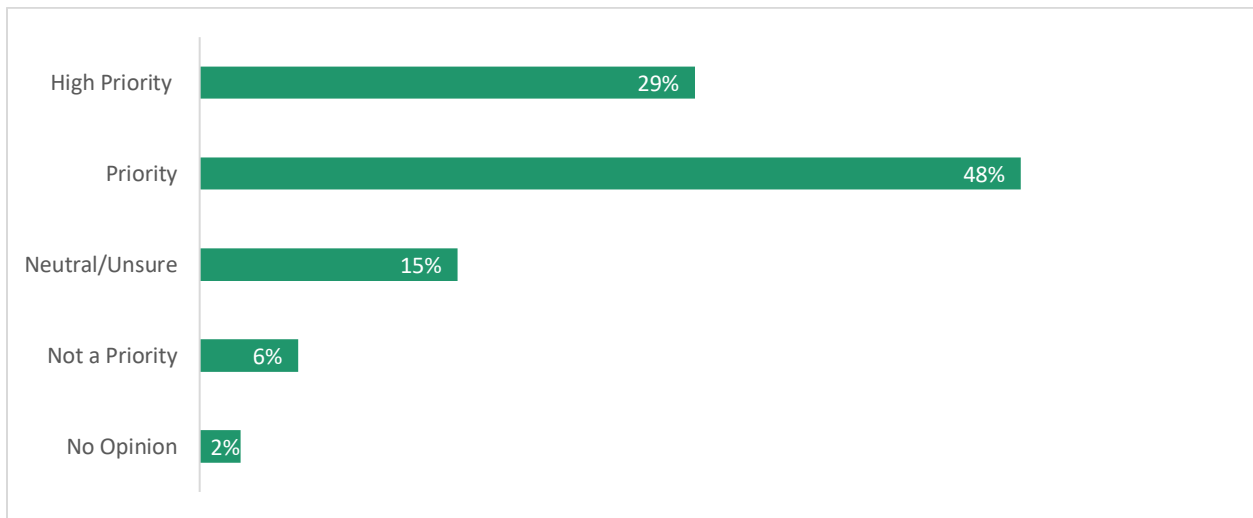
Figure 30: Quality Employees Are Available to Fill Open Jobs in Rowan County





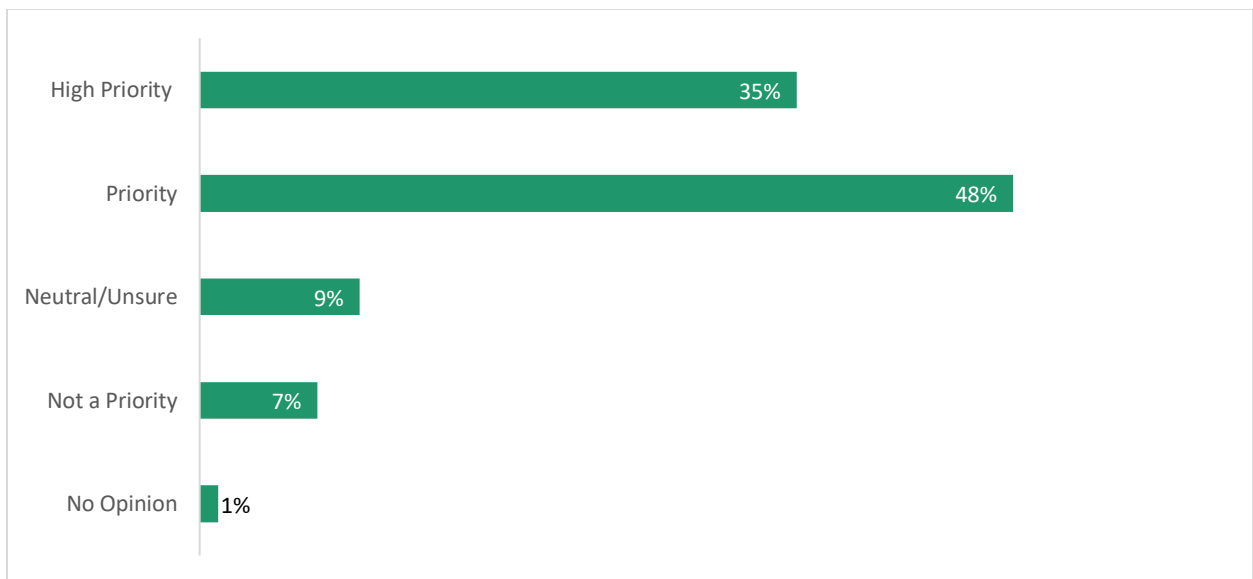
When asked whether the Rowan County government should focus on industrial economic development and business recruitment, almost half of respondents (48%) felt that it should be a focus. Overall, 77% of respondents felt a government focus on economic and business recruitment should be a high priority or priority. In total, 6% of respondents do not see this topic as a priority for the County government.

Figure 31: Rowan County Government Focus on Industrial Economic Development and Business Recruitment



Additionally, respondents were asked if they feel the County government should focus on small business and downtown investment. Again, most respondents (48%) felt this topic should be a priority for County government, with another 35% who felt this should be a high priority. Only 1% of respondents had no opinion on this topic, reinforcing its degree of importance.

Figure 32: Rowan County Government Focus on Small Business and Downtown Investment





Respondents were asked to specify one or more new businesses that would be a good fit for the City of Morehead and/or Rowan County. Of the total, 69% thought Tourism (Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodation & Food Services) would be an asset to the County. Additionally, 61% of respondents would like to see more Retail. The next largest selections were Advanced Manufacturing (36%), Information Technology (35%), and Agriculture (33%). The least selected option with only 21% of respondents who indicated the desire to see more of was Transportation and Warehousing.

In addition to the selections offered on the survey, respondents provided other options they saw fit for new businesses in the area. While most categories fit into the categories provided about, they provided more specificity around the subject areas. For example, many respondents hoped to see family friendly activities, sit-down restaurants with healthy food options, and breweries/alcohol related activities. One respondent would like to see downtown “light up,” including hotels with space for business meetings, attractions, and nice sit-down restaurants. Multiple respondents specified alcohol-related locations, such as a brewery, distillery, or winery. Some respondents wanted to see big-box chain stores come to the area, such as Marshall’s, TJ Maxx, or a General Store.

Figure 33: New Businesses as a Good fit for City of Morehead and/or Rowan County





## APPENDIX C: PUBLIC INPUT SESSION





## PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

The Morehead-Rowan County Planning Process included a Public Input Session to engage residents on the Focus Areas of the Project Plan. The Public Input Session took place on Monday, February 10, 2020. The session was marketed primarily through Facebook, utilizing a purchased advertisement as well as an event group. About 55 leaders and residents from the Morehead-Rowan region were in attendance. The two-hour Session covered a presentation of preliminary findings, a questions and answers session, and Topic Table activities with a spotlight on the Focus Areas and their draft goals. All partners, including TPMA, Destination by Design, and MSE were present for the duration of the presentation and activities.

Below is a summary of the Public Input Session and the feedback provided through the activity sessions.



### Presentation of Preliminary Findings

To start the Public Input Session, the TPMA team presented a quick summary of the data and community engagement that was considered in the drafting of the Focus Area goals. The topics covered in the Presentation of Preliminary Findings included:

- The Project timeline and expected completion;
- An introduction to the five Focus Areas;
- Background data on demographics;
- Key findings from the Focus Groups and Online Survey;
- Draft Goals for each Focus Area; and
- Instructions on the Focus Area Activities.

The 45-minute presentation produced a dialogue among residents and leadership around context and clarification for the Focus Area goals. .

### Health, Wellness, and Safety Activities

Participants were asked to rank a list of most needed health specialties, health resources, and to provide general feedback on the following goals:

1. Attract and retain a sustainable workforce in both healthcare, emergency medical services, and public safety.
2. Build and market social service and wellness resources to the public.

When asked to provide feedback on what wellness resources would be most needed in the Morehead-Rowan County area, participants had a wide variety of idea. Specific feedback included sidewalks, paid fire departments, assisted and



independent living, mental health in schools, and a centralized list of opportunities in the community. Participants were asked to choose the top health specialties needed and the top picked option was behavioral health. This option was the number one pick for seven out of about 15 participants in this activity. The second most picked option was senior care, followed by women's health. Overall options included Holistic Approach, Women's Health, Senior Care, Ophthalmologist, Behavioral Specialty, and Podiatrist.

## Livability and Recreation Activities

The livability and recreation activities were designed and lead by Destination by Design. The activities were designed to solicit participants feedback on a variety of regional assets including connectivity, assets, and downtown. The following goals were drafted to include feedback:

1. Create a vibrant, attractive downtown that features a variety of mixed uses including retail, office, and housing with connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and community assets.
2. Increase connectivity between City and regional natural assets and expand destination-quality outdoor recreation infrastructure to enhance quality of life and encourage tourism.
3. Promote tourism, community cohesion, and sense of place through internal and external branding that connects the County and City with its exceptional downtown, natural and recreational resources, and community events, festivals, and family activities

The first activity related to what the participants wanted to see in downtown Morehead. The most selected activities included Hotel, Retail/Restaurant, and Public Events. In addition, the second activity related to connecting downtown to local and regional assets. The results of this activity showed local assets as a priority of focus. The final activity asked about how participants wanted to connect the local assets described and the top answers included bikes and gravel trails.

The Livability and Recreation activities saw a high number of participations, signaling the participants in the meeting were genuinely interested in actively participating in decisions around the Livability goals. The additional feedback card solicited a variety of comments related to the topic. Some comments included:

- Central media to list activities updated weekly;
- Recreational resources including YMCA;
- Create an overarching organization to run the various recreational facilities;
- Develop Triplett Valley Trail; and
- Develop the public library to connect to schools and downtown.

## Education and Workforce Activities

Participants were asked to rank top occupation focus areas to implement a pathway in Rowan County K-12 Schools and to visualize the future of education in Morehead-Rowan in relation to the following goals:



1. Identify and plan for current and future pre-Kindergarten-12 facility needs with a focus on consolidating schools in a central location and maximizing the development potential of existing assets for other uses.
2. Build upon existing career pathways and expand sector opportunities for students with Maysville Community and Technical College and Morehead State University with a focus on healthcare and pre-professional tracts.

The vision for schools by 2025 included creating citizen-ready students, focusing on the whole child, and creating schools that are within walking distance. The options for potential career pathways included:

- Healthcare & Social Assistance
- Technology/Software Engineer
- Business and Management
- Trades
- Education
- Nursing

The most frequently picked pathway was Technology and Software Engineer, followed by Trades and Healthcare. The most-picked options are in alignment with the focus group and online survey results.

## Environmental Sustainability Activities

The environmental activities asked participants to place a sticker on a map to represent areas of issue related to litter and flooding. In addition, the participants were asked to provide feedback on the following goals:

1. Mitigate litter issues through awareness campaigns, increased recycling options, and better enforcement.
2. Develop a comprehensive flood control plan, creating a system for assessing new or redevelopment in key problem areas.

The participation on Environmental and Sustainability was low, with only one participant placing stickers on the maps provided. While no information was collected from this station of activities at the Public Input Session, the goals were refined and discussed in the Steering Committee meeting, which is summarized below.

## Economy and Infrastructure Activities

The participants were asked to identify the most critical infrastructure needs, top industry needs, and general feedback on the following draft goals:

1. Invest in infrastructure and planning along the KY-801 corridor from the MMRC Regional Business Park to Cave Run Lake.
2. Leverage existing assets and new investments to attract and grow diverse, quality businesses, prioritizing the identified target industries.

When asked which are the most critical infrastructure needs, the participants ranked them in the following order:



1. Broadband
2. Storm Water
3. Building
4. Roadways
5. Sewer
6. Public Transportation

In addition, the most selected industry needs for Rowan County included Scientific Research and Information Technology. The other options included Automotive, Food Processing, Medical Devices, and Warehousing & Distribution.

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The Steering Committee met on the day following the Public Input Session, February 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss the results of the Public Meeting as well as to continue refining the draft goals. This discussion included a brief presentation of the results of each Focus Area activity to ensure the community at large is heard when refining the goals.

### Goal Refinement

To refine the goals, each focus area was brought up, discussed, and a re-defined goal was created. Through this process, the following list of draft goals was created and will be looked at once more by the Steering Committee to be used for the final draft plan.

## MOREHEAD COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REFINED DRAFT GOALS



### HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND SAFETY

- 1) Attract and retain a sustainable workforce in both healthcare, emergency medical services, and public safety.
- 2) Build and market health, wellness, and safety resources to the public.



### LIVABILITY AND RECREATION

- 1) Support appropriate development within the County and City to create a vibrant and attractive community with connectivity between surrounding neighborhoods, local community assets, and regional natural assets that includes destination-quality outdoor recreation infrastructure to enhance quality of life and encourage tourism.
- 2) Promote community cohesion, tourism, and sense of place through internal and external branding that connects the County and City with its exceptional downtown, natural and recreational resources, and community events, festivals, and family activities.
- 3) Encourage the creation of a housing strategy that addresses development and rehabilitation of a variety of housing types at a range



of price points that meet the needs of households and residents of all incomes and ages throughout the County and City.



### EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 1) Educate K-12 students on existing and future job opportunities in Morehead-Rowan County and develop programs aimed at training students for local careers.
- 2) Build upon existing career pathways and expand sector opportunities for students with Maysville Community and Technical College and Morehead State University with a focus on pre-professional, hospitality, and advanced manufacturing tracts.



### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 1) Mitigate litter issues through awareness campaigns, increased recycling options, and better enforcement.
- 2) Develop a comprehensive flood control strategy, creating a system for assessing new or redevelopment in key problem areas.



### ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1) Identify areas of future growth in the County and prioritize and invest in infrastructure to support that growth with a focus on road improvements, water, wastewater, and broadband.
- 2) Leverage existing assets and new investments to attract and grow diverse, quality businesses, prioritizing the identified target industries.

## PUBLIC MEETING PARTICIPANTS

The following participants signed into the public meeting and had the opportunity to provide feedback and insight to the draft goals and Focus Area Activities.

Name of Participant	Organization
Jim & Sharon Jackson	Triple Valley Trail
Dave Keeton	Rajant
Shannon Malone	Lifestyle Real Estate
Carmen Swim	DRA
Larry Dijon	
Pastor Stevens	
Daniel Hook	Hook Outdoors
Jill Butler	Goodwill Industry KY
Brent Ellis	The Black Eye Barber Parlor
David Woyd	St. Claire
Richard White	
Douglas Hoff	USDA
Betty Cutts	Rotary Club
Porter Dailey	Airport
Mickey Reffitt	Resident



Tom Carew	City
Steve Neal	Judge Candidate
Bob Pryor	Resident
Paul Footspaster	TCB/EDC
Joshua Tomow	Gateway ADD
Rodney Fouch	City of Morehead
Elmer Schock	Citizen/MSU
Valerie Caber	Rickend White
Ray White	Magistrate District 1
Darrell Glover	Magistrate District 2
Susette Redwinne	
Toni Hobbs	MSU
Adam Yungsunk	MSU
Melisa Patrica	MSU
Elizabeth Reffit	Retired
Bill Redwine	Community Member
Laura White-Brown	City
Scott Davison	
Laura King	MSU
Kathy King	Community
Morgen Mynhier	Sheltowee
Wes A. Holland	Edward James Investments
Tanner Boyd	WMKY
Jim Trent	Rajant
Tara Hacking	MSE
Tim James	Airport Board
Roy Cingy	
Matt Hamilton	City of Morehead
David Dummer	BD of zone adi.
Bruce Mattingly	Airport Board
Harry Clincke	Judge Executive
Beth Dusley	City Council
Jessica Lawrence	Chair Guidance
Melissa Youngbluth	MSU